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MEMOIRS

OF

A LITERARY VETERAN;

INCLUDING

SKETCHES AND ANECDOTES

OF

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED LITERARY CHARACTERS
FROM 1794 TO 1849.

BY

R. P. GILLIES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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MEMOIRS

OF

A LITERARY VETERAN.

CHAPTER I.

DINNER AT LEIPSIG.—EVENING SPENT WITH HOFRATH MULLNER AT WEISSENFELS.—INTERVIEW. WITH GOETHE AT WEIMAR.

ONWARDS—onwards! Leipsig was our next resting place, but as we staid only one night I have little to say about it, except that it appeared a flourishing town, where strangers bringing a sufficient supply of *argent comptant*, might command all comforts. So well appointed was our hotel, so good the *menage*, that every want was provided for as a matter of course, without being particularly demanded, and without one word of boasting. We arrived about five o'clock, and having ordered dinner *à la mode Anglaise*, it was served within a hour, and in manner following: first, *volaille* in various ways; second, a preposterously large salmon,—third, a spread of tarts, jellies, and creams; but, *lastly*, in honour of English guests

(though not without some delay) an enormous mass of roast-beef. This appeared all as a matter of routine, not to be bragged of: and we were attended by a strong force of waiters, all attired like gardeners, in green aprons.

Our next day's journey (not begun till after midday) was to Weissenfels, a town in itself interesting by many historical recollections, but in my estimation more especially so, for being the abode of Hofrath Müllner, the first author whose works I happened to translate, and who afterwards became one of my kindest correspondents and friends. Among the most remarkable traits in Germany are the deserted *residenzes*, i. e., the small capitals once boasting their castle or palace (which they still possess in ruins) and where in "days of lang syne" there existed the bustle and animation (say rather parade and formalities) of a petty court. In divers of those *residenzes*, now-a-days, there prevails an aspect of quiet poverty and gloom, such as cannot adequately be described. In some instances, the surrounding scenery is nearly as desolate and sombre as that of a remote district in the Scottish highlands, and the once gay palace, usually on a height, with its skeleton windows open to every blast, stands like a great gaunt spectre frowning over the inhabitants, and silently warning them how mutable and evanescent are all human power and prosperity. To this class of neglected towns belongs Weissenfels on the Saale, once the residence of a ducal family, whose doings and sayings I suppose are deservedly forgotten, like those of other dukes and duchesses, but far better known from

association with the names of Gustaf Adolph and Wallenstein, and its proximity to the fatal field of Lutzen, which I believe has been the scene of other battles since then, but of none so memorable.

Like Hoffman (however dissimilar they were in other respects), Müllner combined in himself a strange mixture of qualifications which rarely assimilate together. Bred to the legal profession, having taken his doctor's degree, and practising in the courts as an *avocat*, he did not begin to write poetry in earnest (or did not appear often as a poet) till after he was thirty years of age, and he then produced on the public mind a sudden and powerful sensation. In his personal figure "more fat than bard beseems," and in his ordinary conversation more inclined to sarcasm and humour than to grave discussion, he might have been regarded as among the last persons in the world who are likely to be attracted and inspired by the tragic muse. But though he did write comedies or farces for the stage, and bitter sarcasms for the literary journals, Müllner was by nature extremely susceptible of those *esthetical* impressions which are derivable from the solitude and gloom of a scene like that afforded by the environs of Weissenfels. He has emphatically termed his best tragedy the "production of a dreary autumnal month," and in its predominant imagery it is exactly such a composition as might be expected to arise in the mind of a recluse wandering through the sombre woods on the banks of the Saale on a gloomy October or November day. He was a good classical scholar, an indefatigable student of literature, both foreign and

domestic, and yet (reversing James Hogg's notion about the effects of book learning), he contrived always to be powerfully original. He might borrow the outward form, the cast, even the drift of another's works, but the "subject-matter" and mode of attaining the drift were exclusively his own. This is undeniable even when imitation (in one sense) was avowed, as in his "Twenty-ninth of February," compared with Werner's "Twenty-fourth." He never would borrow a plot or groundwork for any of his dramas, not even from history, as had been so much the fashion in Germany as well as with us. In his own words, he "ran no risk of becoming bankrupt for want of materials." What he most complained of was that farce-writers and opera-composers met with far more encouragement and reward, than even the best tragic poets could expect. In the preface to "Ingurd" he observes, that he had not sought to revive any events recorded by annalists; his object had been "to embody the *truth that never was, but yet is always*" —namely, the truth of human character and passion. Though not a musical genius, he had intense susceptibility for the beauty of good versification. With singular industry he surmounted the difficulties which fastidiousness of taste always creates, and would twist and twine a passage numberless times till it met his own approbation. And so far as I can remember, he was the first author who brought on the stage a really successful drama framed in octosyllabic rhyme, on the model of Calderon and Lope de Vega; a trick of art which I suppose could scarcely be tried out of Spain any where but in Germany,

because nowhere else is the language of the country capable of so much flexibility.

Some will think that I dwell too long on the character of Müllner; but Genius, whose leading characteristic is the pursuit of one cherished object under difficulties, ought to be interesting under every phasis. The composition of a successful play, either in blank verse or rhyme, or the getting it acted as well as printed, is not extremely difficult any where, except in England. But Müllner did more than this; in his retirement at Weissenfels he accomplished more than Goëthe or Schiller had done in furtherance of the same object. He contrived to establish a private theatre under his own direction, where his own plays, and those of Houwald and other literary friends, were tried before being offered in any public arena. He was himself not only manager and stage-manager, but the leading star of his troop. In words this appears very feasible and easy, but, considering the obstacles, the necessity of finding brother actors and sister actresses, of providing scenery and decorations, the realization of such a plan at Weissenfels, with an income perhaps under two hundred pounds per annum, was, in its way, no trifling achievement. For several years, too, he brought out an annual volume, entitled "Plays written for a Private Theatre," with quaint and original Illustrations. Moreover, it seemed as if he could not be content without having some other periodical works always on the anvil. For a long time he edited the "Morgenblatt" (or morning paper), a weekly journal, and, without resigning this, he brought out a strange

production, also weekly, named the "Mitternacht's-blatt" (or midnight paper), of which the contents were exclusively his own composition. It bore for emblematic device a representation of a stormy night, with a waning moon, an outrageous sea, and a vessel about to be shattered on the rocks. By this time Müllner was at open war with almost all brother journalists, and all the world of critics in Germany, whom he attacked with merciless sarcasm, which of course provoked rejoinders; and so the battle was kept up, greatly to his amusement, for with him a sense of the ridiculous always accompanied his assumed wrath. The private theatricals were suspended, and in habits of life he had become isolated, regularly turning night into day, so that his family wished him good morning at the hour when they usually retired to sleep.

Short as this day's journey was, we did not arrive till nearly six o'clock. After ordering dinner (or supper, according to German parlance), my first question was, where to find the house of Herr Müllner, the celebrated poet. "You mean, perhaps, the Hofrath?" "Be it so; but send the *laquai de place*." A waiter forthwith conducted me and my brother-in-law to the poet's abode, which was hard by, and scarcely bespoke more of comfort or luxury than the domiciles of Luther and Melanchthon, as remaining from days of yore. I had brought no letter of introduction, and the first replies were unfavourable. The "Herr Hofrath was not yet up, and could not then receive any visitors." I tendered my name on a card, which being taken up stairs, seemed to

work an immediate change. A young lady appeared (Mademoiselle Müllner, I believe), who entered into lively conversation, and explained that the poet was *aufgestanden*, but had gone out for his morning walk, and, if I would add the name of our *gasthof* to my visiting card, he would pay his respects immediately on his return. I contrived to scrawl with a pencil so much of bad German as indicated our earnest desire to have the honour of his company at seven o'clock to breakfast, at which hour we intended going to dinner.

The intermediate hour was spent in mounting to the height on which stands the once ducal *schloss*, and looking from it over the old town and the windings of the river. Our travels had only increased that feeling already so often mentioned, namely, the ardent wish to find a quiet home, and I should have been heartily glad to settle in this dull old *residenz* of Weissenfels, which would at least have two attractions, the presence of Hofrath Müllner, and proximity to Leipsig, with its inexhaustible wealth of new publications.

Seven o'clock came, but not our expected guest. The first course was served, and I ordered the best wine, feeling sure that he would come. We progressed slowly on purpose. Nearly an hour past away, and just as the never-failing haunch of venison, in more correct words, the usual lump of larded cinder, with sour and sweet sauce, came to table, Müllner made his appearance, exhibiting from the first a jocund, almost convivial expression of countenance and lively manner, which neutralized

and demolished ceremony. With the best of good breeding, he instantly took the chair that had been placed for him, and accepted a slice of the haunch and glass of Burgundy, so that he might be convivial, as he said, and conform to our English fashions. He brought my card in his hand, the ring-finger of which shone conspicuously with brilliants, the recent gift of a Prussian princess in return for his dedication of his last tragedy, the "Albaneserin." *Selon lui*, my name "was already familiar through all his household, and I would find it several times commemorated in the preface to his fourth edition of 'The Schuld.'" Besides, poets, as he averred, were acquainted with each other, and allied, independently of time and space; and when they did meet, it should be not like strangers, but like *jugendfreunde* and brothers. His maxim was immediately carried into practice. In spite of stumbling blocks, the conversation moved incessantly, and we spent a most convivial and jovial evening. The first hearty outbreak of mirth took place upon occasion of the complete break down on the Hofrath's part and mine, he becoming quite unintelligible in a sentence of theoretical English, to which I responded in German almost equally hopeless. Mrs. Clifford came to our aid with unexceptionable French, and when any difficulty occurred, continued through the evening to act as interpreter.

Our conversation was not so desultory as might have been expected, for it turned almost exclusively on the literary character, that is to say, on the fates and fortunes of authors, their habits and eccentricities.

Mrs. Clifford was at pains to explain how very much I disliked interruption and worldly business of all kinds, and how I would not by any chance write poems or translations with a pen, but obstinately persisted in using a painter's brush. The Hofrath responded by concurring heartily in the dislike of interruption and worldly cares, which formed one of his principal motives for turning night into day. As to the quill, too, he disliked it on account of the trouble of mending, and said his own method of workmanship was by pencil and parchment, admitting of erasure by some particular process. He seriously entertained a notion that midnight was the best time for composition, and this upon physiological grounds, the circulation of the blood being quicker than ordinary at that time, and, consequently, the brain clearer and more fit for literary toil. Respecting the rate of remuneration to authors in our country, he expressed great wonder, approaching incredulity, to which we replied too truly, that, *chez nous*, such encouragement was allotted to only a *very* few, who were feasted whilst others might starve, and that generally the literary character was by no means in good odour of sanctity. For example, we could not boast of a single princess or duchess who would think of such a thing as giving a diamond ring for the dedication of a tragedy. Cordially the Hofrath seconded my wish to make a trial of Weissenfels as a residence, and undertook that, if we returned thither, he would himself find a suitable house with furniture at a few days' notice; pledging his word also that with 400*l.* or 500*l.* per annum, an English resident would

be classed among the very richest of the inhabitants, and that with 1000*l.* a-year he would infallibly claim the powers of a *petit souverain!*

At midnight we parted (not thinking that it was to meet no more); and next day, leisurely enough, our journey was prolonged as far as to Weimar, where we did not arrive till about seven in the evening. This not being a deserted *residenz*, I had expected to find a well-appointed hotel, but so very far from comfortable were the preparations, that in some wrath I appealed to our host, who with great indifference tabled the question, "*Was fehlt Ihnen dann?*" in plain English, "What, then, do you want? or, what the mischief would you have?" to which I could not reply in Goethe's heart-rending words, "mir fehlt, ja *alles*," but specified succinctly what I expected and wished for—namely, prompt attendance, good supper, and good wine,—rather more, unluckily, than he was able to afford. All the world knows that Weimar was formerly celebrated as the abode of eminent literary men, but the *soumités* of that society had disappeared one after another, till Goethe, always isolated and pre-eminent in character, was left almost utterly alone. The town never had been enlivened by resources of trade and commerce, and though still a *residenz*, it now appeared in a sad state of decadence. The Prime Minister, Goethe, was far advanced in years; the duke and the ducal family were, I suppose, not distinguished for mental energy, as we heard of them neither good nor bad. One might say at Weimar, as I already did in another place, that nothing seemed truly flourishing and vivacious

but the noble verdant trees in the park. They, at all events, were quite as lively now, waving their leaves and blossoms in the summer breeze, as in the bright days when Schiller directed the court theatre, and composed his "Wallenstein" and "Don Carlos." The ducal palace (deserted, however, for the summer months) still existed of course; so did the theatre, the Royal Library, museums, and picture galleries, all open to the public; but *where* was the public? So silent was the air and so few people were visible, that Weimar might seem almost a deserted place, the mere ghost of a *residenz*. To my notions, therefore, it was out of sight the most attractive town which we had yet visited. In such a place it could not possibly be difficult to find lodgings; an author in search of retirement might profit by the park, the theatre, the books, antiquities, and pictures, in a mood of the most enviable tranquillity; and of course my desire to settle down quietly and to become *einheimisch* (*i. e.*, to feel at home), increased tenfold.

At Berlin, Dr. Lappenberg had said: "If you go to Weimar, you will require a letter of introduction to Goethe, and though I cannot give, I can easily obtain you one;" but not intending to go farther than Dresden, we declined his obliging offer. Consequently we now felt as if almost admitted to the great man's presence, yet were unprovided with any credentials to sanction a request for such an honour. By our crabbed host and his solitary waiter, the rank of Goethe, as a poet, seemed unknown; he was recognised and identified only as his excellency the Minister (I forgot the precise title) in which capacity it

certainly did not seem over probable that he would condescend to grant an audience to utter strangers. But I determined to brave all difficulties. It is true that I had already translated Müllner's "Schuld," his "Twenty-ninth of February," his "Ingurd;" Grillparzer's "Ancestress;" also, Oehlanschläger's "Hagbarth and Signa" and "Correggio;" Ingemann's "Masaniello;" Raupach's "Venetian Conspiracy," and Korner's "Zriny," and by so doing, as Müllner informed me, had acquired some little notoriety in all the literary circles. But I could not trust to this, for Goethe was of no circle, or rather he was the centre of a world-wide circle, and not easily approached. My short morning's work was to compose three lines of as good German as I could muster, submitting that a humble student from Edinburgh, after a long journey, wished earnestly for the honour of a brief interview with the greatest of German poets.

Provided with this, and accompanied by my brother-in-law, Capt. James Macdonell, I betook myself to the "statesman's" house, a sort of mansion such as a Duke's land-steward, in England, certainly would not have considered very *distingué*. The time was about eleven o'clock, and the valet in attendance intimated that his master was dressing; however, he would present my *billet*. Almost instantly he returned, and with a profound obeisance desired that we should walk into the saloon, where his excellency would join us after a few minutes.

We had time enough to wonder at the absence of all luxurious or costly appliances in the *salle de reception*. Some few busts and statues there were, it is

true, also a grand pianoforte, or, as I rather think, it was a harpsichord, from the days of Werther and Charlotte, and of course there were chairs, and a table with some few books. But, alas! the dark oak-floor was uncarpeted, and if we had a feeling of cold even at midsummer, what must have been the atmosphere of that room in a dreary winter's day, even supposing that the stove had its due supply of wood and turf? Truly, it was evident enough that the poets of Germany were not more fastidious, on the question of "comfort," than were in days of yore the stout heroes of the so-called Reformation.

I have elsewhere recorded the impressions made by an interview with Goethe, and can scarcely do any better than repeat my former words, namely, that in figure, contour of features, mode of speech (or penchant to taciturnity), and demeanour, he bore a certain indefinable resemblance to John Kemble; I have said indefinable, because it amounted merely to this—that one reminded of the other. There were wide discrepancies. Firstly, Kemble did not live to be old, and besides, his countenance, even in age, would not have been so deeply marked by the wear and tear of thought as Goethe's. No doubt, a *good* portrait of the latter, if given to Lavater without any name, would have served as materials for a long chapter. The forehead, eyes, and eyebrows alone, would have been enough for several pages. Now as the door opened from the farther end of the reception-room, and his excellency's tall, gaunt form, wrapped in a long, blue surtout, which hung loosely on him, slowly advanced, he had veritably the air and

aspect of a *revenant.* His was not an appearance, but an *apparition.* Evidently and unmistakeably he had belonged to another world which had long since passed away; but *malgré* attenuation, and some traces of impaired health (such as a yellow suffusion of the eyeballs) there were, nevertheless, indications that the smouldering fire of youth yet lingered in that gaunt frame, and that though he had belonged to a past world, he was yet perfectly able to sustain a part in the present.

This was at first rather a perplexing interview, a vehement contrast to that with Hofrath Müllner, who took his place at the supper-table and chatted away from the moment of his entrance. On the contrary, Goethe advanced in profound silence, in a mood, seemingly, of utter abstraction, and after the manner of ghosts in general, he waited to be spoken to! The spirit had been evoked from his other world, had condescended to appear, and now the question was, what sort of conversation ought to be, or might be, without impropriety, addressed to him? The plain truth was, that I had set my heart on seeing Goethe, but did not for a moment imagine that my communications could have any interest for him, and in sheer desperation I contrived to tell him this much, then fortunately made allusions again to our long journey, and of my great wish to settle somewhere, at Weimar, for example.

As it happened, the best of diplomatists could not have managed better. This was a practical point to which (with a half smile at my broken German) he answered readily, that nothing could be more easy;

Weimar was not over-populous, and he believed that Hoffmann, the court bookseller, was at that moment charged to dispose of a house and garden at a very low rent. To this he added: "In days of yore, there were Englishmen here, who passed their time pleasantly enough, and some of whom I remember with esteem and regret." I ventured to inquire whether Sir Brooke Boothby had been among the chosen few? This question was a lucky hit, for he immediately fixed his eyes with searching expression, and spoke with animation:—

"I saw more of him," said he, "than of any other English resident, and regretted his departure the most. You knew him perhaps?"

"Very intimately."

"Is he still alive?"

"I believe so. But he left Scotland in 1815, and since then, I have not received any letters from him."

"Sir Brooke was a pleasant neighbour, and friend of mine. *Was hat er bey Ihnen gemacht?*" (What was he about in Scotland?)

"He filled up his time after his own fashion—wrote a good deal, especially in verse, dined early, and in the afternoon painted in water-colours."

"Has he ever spoken to you about Weimar"

"He told me about his having obtained a commission in the Düke's cavalry, in order to have the privilege of appearing at Court in boots instead of silk stockings."

"*Ganz richtig* (very true). His health was not good: he complained of our cold winters, disliked silk stockings, and could ride better than he danced."

This important fact disposed of, I mentioned that Sir Brooke always had beside him a first edition of "Werther," and a few other German books, from which he had made some translations, and that one of these, the "Genius and the Bayadere," was, at my suggestion, published in the "Edinburgh Annual Register."

"I gave him those books," said his Excellency, but there was one point of difference betwixt us. He was a good French scholar, but never would take the trouble of studying our language so as to comprehend our best authors. He began zealously — *allein es mangelte ihm an Ausdaur.* (He was wanting in perseverance). Another of your countrymen, Mr. Mellish, was in that respect more praiseworthy."

I tried to introduce other literary characters, but could only bring him thus far, that he desired to be particularly informed whether Sir Walter Scott had quite recovered his health, to which I replied, that not only had he recovered, but seemed stouter than before; and that his industry was unequalled and indomitable. I then endeavoured to speak of the singular influence that "Faust" and "Wilhelm Meister" had exercised on English authors; of Lord Byron's debt to the former in "Manfred," and so forth; but to this his answers were in a tone of perfect indifference. He cared not a straw about praise, and was inaccessible to flattery. About twenty minutes sufficed for our audience; but he was very courteous at parting, and said he should rejoice to hear that I could meet with an abode at Weimar suitable to my finances and views.

Truly there is little enough in the conversation as recorded above: but I had forgotten to mention that his Excellency was then said to be slowly recovering from a serious illness, and from what we heard afterwards, I had more reason to wonder that he condescended to speak so much than that he said little, for upon such occasions of strangers desiring to see the lion, he was usually very reserved, *nonchalant* and taciturn.

My own notions of Goethe's character are, perhaps, both erroneous and peculiar; for it seems to me that in his case, not only was the poet subservient to the man of the world, but that as a poet he has frequently been overrated. For example, I am unable to think of the "Helena" otherwise than as a bizarre mystification; yet we have heard it called a "philosophy of literature set in poetry" and an "encyclopædia of erudition!" It is not impossible that he may have laughed in his sleeve at the profound views imputed to him, where none such had been intended. As a literary artist and man of various talent, Goethe perhaps is unequalled. If he had enthusiasm, he held it under prudent subjection; it never became fitful or too fervid. During his long life he seems to have taken especial care that no one faculty or pursuit should gain undue pre-eminence, and thereby wear out his physical strength. In this respect, of how different a temperament was Schiller! With a share of Goethe's caution and worldly wisdom he probably would have enjoyed thirty years more of life, and completed the noble plans which he left in embryo. In his ordinary

goings-on, it is clear enough that Goethe was very real, very workmanlike, yet very quiet and natural, consequently very wise. He did not forget that the brightest flowers may spring out of the darkest earth, and therefore set considerable store by that earth. He reflected that the dross had its value as well as the ore. With his romance was ever blended not only a due proportion of life's rudest realities, but also a strong spice of the sarcastic and contemptuous. There is not one among all his characters in which he speaks with such entire consistency, with so much *onction* and *verve* as in "Mephistopheles." One might suppose that Byron, as the poet of "Don Juan," was acting a part, perhaps a distasteful one, and that he had recourse to schiedam-and-water at midnight to keep him up under the self-imposed task; but Goethe plays the devil with all his heart and *con gusto*.

The *platitudes*, the coarseness of "Wilhelm Meister," also of the "Dichtung und Wahrheit," of parts even in the "Tasso," are such as a half-witted critic might turn from with real or pretended wrath and disgust; but in German phrase, all this *wurde mit fleiss gethan*, was done intentionally. It was the black setting from which sprang the brightest flowers, the heavy dross out of which the pure ore and indestructible gems emerged, and shone resplendent. Jeffrey seems to have puzzled sadly over Mr. Carlyle's translation of "Wilhelm Meister," till he came to the author's analysis of the character of "Hamlet." Then all at once his eyes were opened, and he acknowledged the light of a master mind. In his every-

day manners, Goethe, according to my fancy, was perfectly simple and *naïf*;—his abstraction and taciturnity were not assumed out of *hauteur*, for this would have implied an alloy of self-conceit, moreover, a lurking deference for the opinions of Mrs. Grundy; than which nothing could be more out of keeping with that sort of contemptuous indifference with which, possibly enough, Goethe regarded all the world (himself, perhaps, not excepted).

I know not how I have been led into these remarks, my object in these volumes having been to record events and impressions, not to enter into criticism. I began these critical paragraphs by saying that Goethe, as a poet, had frequently been overrated, and yet have already opposed my own assertion. Perhaps it is the leading characteristic of a truly original genius, that in the words of Oehlanschläger's "Correggio," he is a riddle to all the world, and no less so to himself! If the Danish Shakspeare, according to Sir T. Lawrence's opinion, embodied in a drama the best illustrations that have been given of the artist character, Goethe, in his "Tasso," had previously aimed at doing the same thing by the poet, as contrasted with the man of the world; but in this instance, as it appears to me, he has given too much of the dross and black-setting; in plainer terms, he has ascribed too much of wildness and weakness to Tasso: so that on the whole the poet becomes more an object of pity than of respect. But in this way, it is true, that the lustre of particular passages comes out with more effect, and their beauty dwells on remembrance indelibly.

As I have said elsewhere, this notable drama presents Goethe's conceptions of a single day spent at Belriguardo, the country-house of Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara, with no other *dramatis personæ* but the said duke, Torquato Tasso, a state secretary named Antonio, and two young ladies, namely Leonora d'Este, the duke's sister, and her friend the Countess Leonora Sanvitale. Technically speaking, there is little or no dramatic action. The interest chiefly hinges on, we cannot say the adventures, but rather the psychological phenomena arising within a space of about twelve hours in the irritable mind of Tasso; who placed amidst the most amiable, kind, and accomplished society, yet contrives to render himself miserable, and to torment or disappoint all those by whom he is surrounded, more especially the amiable, sensitive, learned, and romantic Princess Leonora, who has been led to take the liveliest interest in his behalf, and to whom he is fervently but insanely attached. It is, in short, an illustration of the poetical character with all its eccentricities, as Goethe supposed it to exist in this justly celebrated author yet most capricious and unhappy of beings. That such eccentricities are *inevitable*, it would be too much to say, because at least their indulgence may be kept under control; but that such are the natural concomitants of poetic genius, I suppose must be admitted as an undeniable proposition. Byron, who pretended to sneer at morbid sensibility, has himself observed—

> "'Tis to create, and in creating live
> A being more intense, that we endow

With form our fancies, gaining as we give
The life we image—".

And to what does this creative propensity owe its origin, except to more acute intuitions and more vivid conceptions than fall to the lot of other men? If one must look at all times through the same *lens* or Claude Lorraine glass, will it not equally exercise the same magnifying or colouring power on all objects? And is not the poet thus naturally inclined to view every event or situation in a light different from that in which it appears to less excitable and colder-blooded mortals?

The first passage which occurs to me as memorable, is the Countess Sanvitale's eulogy of Tasso, in answer to her friend, who has rallied her on the poet's attentions.

"I must endure thy jest. It strikes indeed,
But wounds me not. I judge of every man
By his deserts, and only render Tasso
The praise he merits. Evermore awake
To heavenly unison, he scarcely seems
To fix his eyes on this our common earth.
What history or experience can afford,
He grasps in fragments; yet from them brings forth
A grand symmetric whole, by his own fervour
Enlivening that which else were cold and dead.
What others treat with scorn he oft ennobles,
Or from some object of our special favour
Tears off its wonted garniture. So moves
This man within his orb like an enchanter;
Yet to his magic circle are we drawn
By bonds invisible. *He seems to greet us,*
Yet is in spirit far remote. His looks
Are fixed on us, but in our place perchance,
He sees unearthly forms!"

The next, I think, is eminently beautiful: it is from a dialogue betwixt the countess and the poet, when the former visits him in his confinement:

Leonora. Tasso, what means this ?
All are astonish'd. Whither now have fled
Thy wonted mildness, caution, penetration ?
Thy judgment unto each awarding rightly
What unto each belongs ? Thy prudent sway
O'er lips and tongue ? Scarce can I recognize thee !
Tasso. And if those virtues were for ever lost ?
If in the friend once affluent, thou found'st
A grovelling beggar ? Thou art in the right ;
I am no more myself, and yet remain
Even what I was. A paradox it seems,
And yet is none. *The beauteous moon whose light*
So pensive and so pure, by night attracts thee—
That self-same moon glides through the skies by day,
A pale and rayless cloud. I am obscured
By noon-tide glare. You know me not, and from
Myself I feel estranged !"

I shall venture on two more brief extracts. The next shall be from one of Tasso's long soliloquies in prison :

" Yes ; all forsake me now ! Even thou, Leonora !
In those dark hours, no token has she sent,
Of her remembrance. Have I then deserv'd this,
Whose heart so naturally did adore her,
With deep emotions to her slightest voice
Responding ? By her presence, in mine eyes,
The sunbeams were outshone, and as I caught
The fascination of her look or smile,
Resistless seemed the impulse to fall prostrate,
And worship such perfections ! But no more
Of this delusion ! *By the clear cold light*
Of merciless truth, I must perceive and own

The change that I so gladly would conceal!—
I *will* not, and yet *must* believe the change.
Leonora too!—Accuse her not, but yet,
No longer be deceived; like all the rest,
Leonora, too, forsakes thee!
These dread words,
Whose import, long as in my heart remained
One lingering gleam of hope, I should have questioned,—
Those words are now with iron pen engraved
On the full tablet of my miseries,
Indelibly, like Fate's eternal doom!—
Now first, mine enemies are unconquerable,
And I indeed am powerless! If she, too,
Must in the ranks appear, how shall I combat,
Or how endure mine injuries, if from her
Nor look nor gesture cheers the supplicant?—
The words are spoken; thou hast dared to frame them,
And they were true, while no suspicion cross'd thee.
Nought then remains, but with the expiring force
Of consciousness and reason to lament,
And in thy lamentations to repeat
The direful truth—*Leonora too forsakes thee!*

My last extract shall be from the final colloquy of Tasso with Antonio (the "man of the world"), in which the poet's comparison of himself to the storm-driven wave, appears to me equally fine with the passage already quoted in allusion to the moon as a pale rayless cloud.

Tasso. And am I so deeply fallen,
So weak as in thy sight I have appeared?
Has pain o'erthrown the fabric of the mind,
Leaving a heap of ruins, whence no fragment
Of intellect, once powerful, can be drawn
For my support and guidance? Is all fervour
Quench'd and extinguish'd in this heart? Ay, truly,
The world surrounds me, but *I am no more*!
The soul's identity is lost.

Antonio. And yet,
Thou liv'st. Then summon fortitude, and learn
To know thyself even as thou art.
Tasso. I thank thee
For such admonishment. In lore historic,
Might I not find again some proud example,
Some hero that had suffered more than I,
And with his fate compare mine own, thus gaining
The fortitude that I have lost? But no,—
'Tis vain and hopeless all. If man's affliction
Exceeds endurance, Nature has provided
One only solace,—tears and lamentations.
But to the POET, in his grief is given
The power to weave into melodious numbers
His fiercest of emotions, and this power
Has Heaven vouchsafed me."

With an expression of friendly interest and compassion, Antonio here takes him by the hand, and Tasso resumes:

"In thy wisdom thou
Stand'st like the rock, so firmly and exalted,
Whilst I am like the wave by tempests driven!
But of thy strength be not too proud. Those laws
Omnipotent that fixed the rigid rock
Gave also to the wave its quivering motion.
The storm awakes; the helpless wave is borne
In headlong furious course, revolving, foaming!
But on its bosom once, *ere thus assailed*,
How beauteously the sunlight and the moon
With all her bright attendants were reflected!
That bosom is of peace bereft; the light
Of Heaven *no longer* finds therein a mirror!

Amid the tempest's rage, I can no more
Even recognize myself. The helm is broken,
The ship in every timber cracks; the floor
Is rent beneath my steps. I cling to thee,

With both arms thus, as to the rugged cliff
Whereon his vessel struck, the mariner
At last cleaves for protection."

I had not intended to transcribe more, but, by way of variety and contrast, feel inclined to add from the same old repertory, an epigram containing Goethe's notions of a reviewer. I translated it from recollection of an engraving in an old *taschenbuch*, accompanied by the verses; but I believe my version is sufficiently accurate:

"You make a feast, you spread the board
With all your larder can afford—
Fish, fowl, and flesh; then comes a guest,
Who eats as if he were possessed,
Tears up and hacks your savoury roasts,
And of his gluttonous prowess boasts.
Thereafter, through the town he goes,
Resolv'd your folly to expose,
In throwing pearls before a swine.—
'Your soup was thin; austere your wine;
Your venison was not larded well;
You had not truffle nor morel,
For sauce to capons tough, that look'd
As if with soot and cinders cook'd.
In short, 'tis true as he 's a sinner,
You know not how to give a dinner.'
So croaks the cormorant, and repeats
His obloquy to all he meets.
Who could such insolence endure?
Go, hang the dog! He 's a Reviewer!"

CHAPTER II.

ERFURT, GOTHA, FULDA.—ECCENTRICITIES AT GELNHAUSEN.—LIFE AT FRANKFORT-ON-THE-MAYNE. — DR. C. F. BECKER. — SWEDISH LITERATURE.—CAPTAIN AKENTHAL.

At Weimar, having seen Goethe, I only staid long enough afterwards for a walk in the peaceful domains of the Duke's park, wherein, under the verdant shade of the beeches and limes, I seemed to feel at home, and whither I wished to return after our visit to Frankfort. Under this impression I called for a moment on the bookseller, who confirmed his excellency's statement, as to a house and gardens, the property of a deceased Gräfinn, being to let, adding, that furniture could easily be obtained. He was afterwards at the pains to send to my address, at Frankfort, not only the particulars as to rent, but a ground plan of the apartments and environs.

During the next two days' journey, a new world opened, for the route is almost entirely through scenery mountainous, varied, and romantic. Being sadly destitute of advice from any experienced traveller, we passed through the ancient town of Erfurt, without stopping to visit Luther's cell in the Augustine convent, which I believe is the most interesting and best conserved of his habitations yet remaining. As to the far-famed Wartburg, which we afterwards

beheld on its lonely rock, at a distance, we could not spare time for the detour thither. Besides, considering that intelligent visitors have been allowed gradually to carry away his furniture in chips as relics, and even to knock away pieces of the wall bearing the memorable inky traces of the great man's combat with the devil, the *schloss* inevitably declines in interest and is shorn of its dignity.

Onward, onwards; and for our next halting-place to Gotha, with its enormous, unsightly castle, containing numberless apartments, and containing also (*on dit alors*) a reigning duke, whose pleasure it was to turn night into day, (but not like Hofrath Müllner for the sake of the pursuits of literature); thence to Buttlar, a lonely place, among wild scenery, where we passed the night comfortably. The district there is, I believe, exclusively Catholic, and the manners of the inhabitants are civilized and orderly.

Thence we proceeded to the old Catholic town of Fulda, where we stopped only to change horses about noon. That day's journey, I remember, was rather lengthy and fatiguing, and at its close made an indelible impression. In early stages of these notanda, I have spoken of bedeviled houses. I feel very sure that in all the world it will be hardly possible to find such another example of a bedeviled town as Gelnhausen, where we passed the night. We entered it in the *gloaming*, belated and weary; and every object appeared not as it ought, but as it ought *not* to be. Gelnhausen, I suppose, is the only town upon earth, except Pisa, which can boast of a church-tower purposely built to lean to one side, like a drunken man,

as if it were tottering and about to fall. The sight of this exemplary edifice made, at the outset, a most unfavourable impression. Passing through a low, narrow gateway, we came among streets, or much rather, gloomy, narrow lanes, where the houses seemed built entirely of wood, and the upper half abutted over the under. These, though very old, form the modern town of Gelnhausen. The place, I believe, has been twice devastated by fire, the last event of that kind having occurred sometime during the Thirty Years' War. It possesses neither trade, commerce, nor civilized society, and this once imperial residence with the remains of Barbarossa's grand palace had then (I know not what it is now), degenerated into a nest of thieves. In our *gasthof*, said to be the best, there appeared but one performer, who answered for waiter, host, and hostess. According to rule on such occasions, and at such barbarous places, he began by parading a great number of wax candles, at the same time promising superb entertainment in all possible ways. Commencing at eleven o'clock, he occupied himself incessantly till two, with professions and attempts to get through the ceremonials of serving supper, endeavouring to make up for very scanty provisions by incessant talk. Betwixt two and three o'clock, as beds to sleep upon were out of the question, we got once more *en route*, our loquacious friend, the waiter, presenting a long bill amounting to the sum of fifty florins (nearly five pounds) which, knowing that dispute would only be a useless waste of time, I paid without demur. As such a windfall was, probably,

rather unusual at Gelnhausen, he must need prove his *reconnoisance* by making us a present, namely, a green frog in a bottle half-filled with water, to serve as a barometer, inasmuch as when the weather inclined to dryness, the prisoner would keep at the bottom, and *vice versâ*.

I was now heartily wearied of travelling. Besides, I reflected with some discontent, that had I taken one of the dilapidated houses, *malgré* the high rent, and settled at Hamburgh (whence my sister-in-law would have sailed for London and Calais) we should have saved a large sum of *argent comptant* that our migrations had already cost. Passing through Hanau, we arrived next afternoon at Frankfort, where the hotels, in 1821, were numerous as they are now. We halted at the first, which offered a sufficient number of unoccupied apartments; and I resolved to find a domicile and settle at last, irrespective of the question whether the place suited our plans or not. But as the result proved, I could not have chosen better for the purposes I had in view, among which the thorough acquisition of the German language was a leading object. Even at this hour, I look back on Frankfort with a feeling of attachment, and would willingly return thither, though well aware that I shall see it no more. Truly enough it was a mere trading town, not having much to boast of in regard to its literary men or literary institutions. But nowhere in Germany had the old ramparts been turned into such delightful pleasure grounds as at this *handelstadt*. In that respect, at all events, the senate and inhabitants showed good taste and judgment.

The town might be fancifully compared to an island, in the midst of the waving green woods of its beautiful gardens.

At present, I think Frankfort is almost as well known to English tourists and refugees as Wiesbaden or Boulogne. In those days, on the contrary, *not one* English family sojourned there, and during the whole length of our stay (excepting a secretary of legation) I knew not of more than two British inhabitants. One of these was Father Ingram, a *ci-devant* monk, of the Scotch College at Wurzburg, who lived like an anchorite; the other, an exemplary gentleman of independent fortune, who resided always at one of the hotels, and whose daily habit, by way of pastime, was to consume from ten to fourteen bottles of the best wine, winding up towards bed-time with an ample dose of brandy. It might be supposed that foreigners being at Frankfort so very few in number, should associate and pull together, but being, as my reader knows, of rather a peculiar humour, I declined the honour of this worthy's prolonged acquaintance.

Not without delay and difficulty I succeeded in obtaining here what I had elsewhere sought in vain, namely, furnished apartments. Our house adjoined the public gardens, near the Allerheiligen-thor. It had, besides, a pleasant garden of its own, with arbours and rows of fruit-trees, and commanded from the rear a beautiful prospect of the river Mayne, towards the little town of Offenbach. For this dwelling place I gladly concluded a bargain, and next commenced my zealous inquiries after a competent professor of the German language. But, unfortu-

nately, in a town where there were so few British residents, it could not well be expected that a German-English teacher would obtain means of subsistence. As far as I know, there was only one such professor at Frankfort, and although he understood English and could, of course, use his native tongue, he was at the same time so illiterate and obtuse, that the authors I wished to read were to him nearly incomprehensible. I went on trusting to my own perseverance as usual, till the visits of this wise man became quite burdensome. Indeed, his first demand on entering the room was not for a book, but for a *krug* of strong beer, gradually imbibing which, he fell asleep; and, in short, I found myself much farther from the road to improvement than when with our friends at Edinburgh.

It was, I remember, in a beautiful morning in the beginning of September, that in consequence of a recommendation from our banker, Mr. Metzler, I was favoured with a morning visit from Dr. C. F. Becker, of Offenbach. From this amiable man and profound philologist, I received more instruction, *within one half-hour*, respecting the practice and principles of his language, than years of unassisted study could have afforded! Accidental circumstances had led him to consider minutely all the leading points of difference which exist betwixt German and English, and which cause the two languages so vehemently to contrast with each other. Independently of this, Dr. Becker, in regard to his native tongue, was veritably an enthusiast. He believed, and not without good reasons, that it is more powerfully expressive

than any other language of modern Europe, consequently, that an author having power therein, had gigantic power. He held that there was no *nuance* of thought or feeling, however delicate and evanescent, which by means of it could not be fixed and imparted! Further, he was a sturdy logician and merciless critic. Schiller, among modern poets, was beyond comparison his favourite, and he respected him not merely for what he had accomplished, but for what he would have done had not his brilliant career been untimely arrested. As a critic he visited the greater number of modern writers with unsparing censure, being a decided enemy to the long involved sentences in which they are so apt to indulge. Like his favourite Schiller, without being a professed metaphysician he was deeply imbued with the principles of Kant's philosophy, which when thoroughly understood, must exercise a beneficial influence in every intellectual pursuit. Considering these qualifications, no wonder that it became a "white day" in Dr. Becker's calendar, if he met with a zealous student anxious to overcome every difficulty.

To his first question, *Was fehlt Ihnen dann?* (what is most wanting?) I answered instantly, "Not practice in reading, not the knowledge of words, but distinct rules for their arrangement."

"Quite right. Your question almost proves that you will make good progress. You desire rules and shall have them. We have, properly speaking, little or no idiom. Our language is in all respects modified by rules fixed, clear, and immutable, which no

author who writes pure German *dares* transgress. Give me pen and ink. Here are our three forms of syntax. Consider these warily, and compare them with what you read in the course of this day. I shall attend you without fail at the same hour to-morrow."

Punctually at two o'clock next day was heard the doctor's knock, to which I afterwards became so well accustomed! I had applied his three rules, but was not satisfied.

"I am glad to hear it. Give me the paper and a pen. What I left for you yesterday was only the three forms; now for the rules, eight in number. Once understood, these will not be forgotten; besides, they are exemplified in every page that you read. For the future, so far as I can see, you do not require an instructor. Daily practice will do all the rest."

My views, however, were very different. No sooner had I become convinced how correct and sufficient were the rules which the doctor had given, than I determined to put them in practice by original composition in the German language, at the same time desiderating earnestly that my productions might be subjected to the most rigorous criticism and carefully corrected. I desired to test practically its power as a medium for the conveyance of thought. I had been reading Kotzebue's Autobiography, a ponderous octavo, which abounds with platitudes, almost with babyisms, which one would scarcely have expected from such a practised artist. Discreetly enough, I took this unpretending book as a model, and began to write the narrative of our travels from Edinburgh,

in a style so prolix and minute, that at the rate of fifty folio pages per day, written with a brush, it soon assumed a portentous bulk. With patience unexampled, did my kind friend Dr. Becker come every second day to hear the contents of these pages. He cared not how twaddly the matter might be, for he thought exclusively of correcting the language and assigning clear and valid reasons for every verbal emendation. But I did not confine my exercises to this easy work. Having on my table a then unpublished story by Professor Kruse of Copenhagen, in the author's autograph, I translated it with care, and on that basis manufactured in German blank verse a tragic drama of three acts, which Dr. Becker revised with great care (being at the same time amused by it, for he did not know the plot). Lastly, I made an entire transcript of his German Grammar for Englishmen, which was afterwards published in London by Murray, and which, along with his other highly-wrought and ingenious productions, have obtained for him a wide-spreading and lasting reputation. I know not of any German philologist, not even excepting the Brothers Grimm, more estimable than Dr. Becker; and in private life he was as exemplary as in his literary capacity. Having neglected his profession of M.D. for the sake of literature, and having no fortune to fall back upon, he, nevertheless, avoided debt and difficulties, by taking a limited number of English pupils, *en pension*, at Offenbach. For himself individually, the narrowest circumstances could have no terrors, for one of his favourite maxims was that bread and water are the sole support neces-

sary for the prolongation of strength and health; a rule which he cheerfully practised.

Such employments as those above-mentioned would alone have served me to make a busy and happy autumn, but I had found other auxiliaries and collaborators, for example, Baron Amsberg, Professor Pierre, and Captain Äkenthal. The latter merits my special remembrance. He was a native of Upsal, had held the rank of captain in the Swedish army, and now lived frugally and contentedly at Frankfort on some infinitesimal pension, assisted by his gains as a teacher of the French language, in which capacity he was employed by some of the wealthy merchants. But for instruction in the language of his own country, until my appearance I suppose he never had a single applicant. To this good and unassuming man it was, therefore, a pleasant surprise to be informed that I had already translated some works from the Danish of Oehlanschläger and Ingemann, and that I wished earnestly to cultivate an acquaintance also with the literature of Sweden. Eagerly he insisted how much more interesting and varied it was than that of Denmark, and how much more complete and euphonious was the language. So we resolved to commence our studies directly, only felt on both sides sorely puzzled for want of books enough to read. In the repositories of Mr. Vaarentrap, an antiquarian bookseller, I soon found a Grammar and Dictionary, but my worthy instructor had only a few old numbers of the "Phosphoros" and other periodical works, emanating from Stockholm, and I could not find more than two odd volumes of poetry and

prose by Leopold, a once notable author of the *soi-disant* classical or French school, now superseded; but we made the most that we could of these.

I have never forgotten the vivid feelings produced by the first poems which I perused in the Monthly Magazine, entitled "Phosphoros." There appeared so much force and freshness of life and feeling in the productions I found there, that once more a new literary world seemed to open, and I believed, not without reason, that its unexplored mines might be worked *ad infinitum*. My friend Äkenthal was not sparing of arguments to deepen this impression. In truth, he himself seemed to cherish a conviction, that in the departments of the drama, of romance, of biography and history, not forgetting lyrics and music, the Swedes were entitled to hold a higher rank than any other nation on earth. As for the language, he maintained it was, at all events, as powerful as English, and more euphonious than Italian.

Connected with these studies was a trifling incident, which would be utterly unworthy of notice were it not that it reminds me of an extraordinary and truly original character who then resided, in seeming poverty and utter obscurity, at Frankfort. The two odd volumes, already mentioned, of Leopold's works, were duly conned over for the sake of practice, not omitting any part however insipid. In this way we came one afternoon to a grand ode, applicable to the coronation, at Stockholm, of his majesty Gustavus IV.; where, in a style the most elaborate and ornate, he was addressed as the fountain of intelligence, light, and beneficence; the "rising sun,"

not only of Sweden, but of Europe, and so forth: in short, with all the froth and nonsensical exaggeration that usually belong to the productions of *soi-disant* poets addressing their flatteries to crowned heads. An accidental summons called me for a moment into the next room; where, happening to look out at the window, I saw (no unusual sight) this identical monarch, the *ci-devant* "rising sun" and fountain of intelligence, &c., stationed in the gardens, and looking up, as he often did, at our house: in other words, there stood the brave "Colonel Gustafson," his tall meagre figure arrayed as usual in his peculiar uniform, namely, an entire suit of plain blue cloth the buttons covered therewith, so that all might be of the same shade, and in his long pale visage bearing, as I thought, a singular resemblance to the ordinary portraits of his predecessor Charles XII. Why this rightful owner of the crown, this veritable king, preferred to live at Frankfort, I cannot guess, unless it were for the sake of the gardens in which he so often took his lonely walks; or because in this *Hans* town he was more utterly neglected and unnoticed than, probably, he would have been at any *residenz*.

His home at Frankfort consisted of two small apartments, over the shop of a tinsmith, in a narrow obscure street, where, as a retired officer, he lived (according to *on dit*) upon a scale of even abject poverty; not for want of pecuniary means, though his revenue was very limited, and not from avarice, for the brave old lion was, I am sure, as incapable of turning miser as of turning coward;

but because, neither in health nor spirits would his condition have been improved by habits of luxury. At Frankfort, as I believe, he had not a single confidant, nor spoke with any one, hardly with the bankers, Gebhard and Hauck, through whom he received his money. By the vastly wise and enlightened community of this town, he was regarded, not as the ex-king, not as a man of varied talents and accomplishments, which he really was; on the contrary, they saw merely his eccentricities, and looked upon him as a madman. In one respect our amiable world is the same in every land; with admirable clearness and precision it detects in one instant the vices or incapacity of *the fallen;*—it matters not whether he be ex-king, or ex-banker, or ex-laird, only let him be sufficiently impoverished and enfeebled, there needs no other premiss than this; the conlusion in regard to madness or vice will follow immediately. For my own part, from all I heard from Captain Äkenthal, who knew somewhat of the king's character and personal history, I believe he was not, and never had been, mad; but, unfortunately, he did labour under a certain constitutional malady, which, when exasperated, tends more than any other to depress the spirits, to cloud the brain and irritate the temper; and this would have unfitted him for the cares and responsibility of the government, even had the Swedes desired to get rid of Bernadotte. To this cause also might be ascribed his lonely and ascetic habits. If he had any acquaintance, I suppose, it was among the booksellers, one of whom had recently published for him a quarto pamphlet on

a scientific subject, which was said to be both learned and ingenious. In Germany the custom of salutation by lifting the hat is usual, *en passant*, even when parties are not on speaking terms. Almost every day I met Colonel Gustafson in the gardens, till at last the ceremony passed regularly betwixt us; and had I remained long enough at Frankfort, perhaps I should, for once in my life, have fallen into acquaintance with a king; and, under circumstances much more interesting, according to my notions, than if he had been placed on his ancestral throne.

One day at Frankfort passed over so like to another, that there is little to record; yet how much of study and amusement might there be crowded into one short day! In the mornings I prepared, assiduously, a batch of "copy" to be corrected by Dr. Becker, who came punctually at two o'clock, and did not stay longer than one hour, unless when we got into some abstruse discussion. For the afternoons and evenings there was variety of amusement; but I cared little for any except such as fell in our way unsought for, during our rambles into the country. Through the kindness of Mr. von Bethmann, who was then regarded as a *petit souverain* at Frankfort, I could command at the theatre the representation of any play that we preferred; but as the performance commenced at six, which was our dinner hour, and as I worked in the evenings, this privilege was never used but once, when we had the pleasure of seeing Müllner's "Schuld" admirably well performed.

On the difference betwixt a German and English

theatre, as indicating a different grade of moral culture and civilization, I have written already in volume second; but this subject is again forced on my attention. I repeat, that a German citizen goes to the play because he wishes to be improved as well as entertained; he wishes to forget himself, his ordinary associates, and the daily cares of his working life. For the present his whole heart and mind are in the performance, are given up to the poet;—that performance is for him a kind of *esthetical* sacrament; and I repeat that he would as little think of disturbing it as of interrupting the service at church. Consequently, an actor in Germany throws heart and soul into his part; for he knows that if well played it will be responded to and appreciated. Every line will be fairly heard, and every word of the poet will *tell* on the audience. *Per contra*, when John Bull attends the theatre it is with very different motives, and in a very different mood; he expects not, he wishes not to be raised into any better sphere of existence; he is too amiably decided and pertinacious in his character to lay it aside. What is addressed to the eye he can appreciate tolerably well; but for the dialogue or music, *comparatively*, he cares not a rush. By no means will he forget his ordinary life or connexions. Instead of wishing to place heart and soul under the control of the poet, he looks out *jauntily* or sarcastically for his acquaintances. Obeying instinctively the precept of the old Greek philosopher, he is good enough to "speak that you may know him." His affections, truly, are as little with Shakspeare as they are with Spontini. "Where has Fitz-

allan bid himself to-night? — On my life, there's Lucy Paget — don't you see, next to old mother Grundy, in rouge and ringlets," and so forth. But in a well-regulated house, specially under the patronage of the crown, precautions are needed; and in order that no vulgar low characters should be admitted, door-keepers are appointed, who rigorously decide on the character of the man by the colour and tie of his cravat, the cut of his coat, and the condition of his boots! Under such circumstances I do not think it is much to be wondered at if our legitimate drama declines. It was in a rude but energetic state in Shakspeare's time. Sixty years afterwards, being patronized by that exemplary monarch and accomplished gentleman Charles II., our theatre became, very truly, a large brothel, and a new play was or was not likely to succeed according to the *quantum*, less or more, of the vilest obscenity wherewith it was loaded. Our national drama has gone through many a phasis since then; but its life, I suppose, may now be considered finally extinct.

Another mark of civilization, no doubt, is the prevalent taste for music. During the fine weather of autumn and spring, we quitted the gardens to visit picturesque hamlets in the country; and there were sundry *ritterschlösser*, deserted now, except by people who rented them as places of entertainment, to each of which was attached an excellent band. In the course of rural walks, for a few *kreutzers*, or indeed without paying at all, more of good music might be heard within one week at Frankfort, than in a whole year at Edinburgh. And on these occasions, instead

of exhibiting scenes of drunkenness, brawling, and brutality, the people were always quiet, orderly, and cheerful. At the Sandhof, Riedhof, and other such places, betwixt Frankfort and the borders of the Darmstadt forest, I have spent many pleasant hours.

But my studies were quite enough to fill up every day and evening. An active and liberal bookseller sent me, at intervals, large bales of new books in sheets, from which I selected whatever seemed likely to promote my purposes, and returned the rest. My plan was to avoid all society, except such as could promote those studies; and I had no time to accept the hospitalities which Mr. von Bethmann, the leading banker at Frankfort, kindly proffered. Father Ingram sometimes called, and applauded my zeal in acquiring the German language; but in modern literature he was no proficient. On some subjects, however, we agreed vastly well; for example, he firmly believed in the miracles of Prince Hohenlohe, and in the ghosts of the Oden Wald; not without assigning valid reasons in both cases, however discrepant. During our sojourn at Frankfort there happened to be a great outbreak of the said ghosts; and though Mr. Ingram was far advanced in years, and infirm in health, we proposed an excursion to the scene of action, which was at a moderate distance, in order to survey the two ruined castles, to verify the signatures to the last protocol, and to hear the *vivâ voce* attestations of living witnesses. I wish that we had done so, but day after day passed over like a pleasant dream, and I would not leave my employ-

ments, nor lay down my writing brush, except for an afternoon or moonlight ramble.

Whilst at Frankfort, I had the opportunity of assisting, as the French would call it, at two of the great Fairs, the first of which took place in October: but they had little interest for me, except as regarded the purchase of tobacco-pipes and meerschaum boles in all sorts of fashions; objects which I valued in those days, but for which I should not now care a rush. I do not forget the beauty of that autumn, the varied colouring of the Darmstadt forest, the new aspect assumed by every hamlet, the deep stillness and serenity of the air, nor how glad I was to return from a walk among the crowded booths, into the quiet atmosphere of the gardens in the golden sunlight; nor do I forget the continued mild gloom of the next winter, during the whole of which we had scarcely one day's frost, nor the lively interest with which I watched the progress of next spring, the first budding leaves and flowers in our garden, and the first notes of the thrush and the blackbird. How long we might otherwise have staid at Frankfort, I cannot say, but circumstances occurred which seemed to render my immediate return to Edinburgh unavoidable. This decision having been once adopted, instead of abating my studies, I continued them with redoubled zeal, in order that I might make the most of my opportunities up to the last moment. Gradually I had progressed so far, that at all times I spoke German in preference to English, quite conscious that although I could not get rid of a foreign accent, I never failed to be very clearly intelligible,

nor committed any blunders against the rules of syntax. And as the remainder of my fortune had, during the last six years, been greatly dilapidated, I was glad to think that my command over the language might probably be turned to some account, seeing that, as a translator and adaptor of German literature, I had scarcely one competitor to contest the field.

CHAPTER III.

HOMEWARD ROUTE BY THE RHINE. — LIFE IN HOLLAND.—VOYAGE FROM ROTTERDAM.— RETURN TO EDINBURGH. — MR. J. G. LOCKHART. — THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD. — JAMES GRAY, AUTHOR OF "ONA."—WILLIAM SCOTT IRVING.— COTTAGE AT LASSWADE.— RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN GALT.—PROFESSOR TENNANT.—CAPTAIN THOMAS HAMILTON.—PATRICK FRASER TYTLER.

MIGRATION once more! Away, away! It was with heartfelt regret, however, that I left my tranquil abode in the Frankfort Gardens. Our last week was one of troublesome bustle, for though imprisonment for debt is unknown in Germany, and in England it would be inferred that foreigners could not there live on trust, so boundless had been my credit, that claims almost a year old lay in complete abeyance; tradesmen would not send in their accounts till compelled by repeated summons and menace to do so, and I would not depart till all were paid.

Our quiet garden never looked so attractive as in the morning towards the end of April, when we left it, for the air was then loaded with fragrance, and the fruit-trees were snow-white with blossoms. Few in number as were my friends, we had what is called a *scene* at parting. On both sides were sorrow and tears. Even as recently as in 1845, I heard from a friend who called on my *ci-devant* bookseller, Boselli,

and some other old acquaintances, that my good repute and memory at Frankfort had by no means faded away.

In regard to travelling, if at that time I had ventured to suggest the use of steam-boats on the Rhine and Mayne, I should infallibly have been pooh-poohed down, and told that these rivers were unfit for such vessels; or if I had presumed to talk about improvement of the roads, and of locomotives by land, I should with equal surety have been reckoned an unchained madman, fitted only to keep company with his scientific majesty the ex-King of Sweden. Oden Wald ghosts might have gained, and *did* gain credence, but not theories like these. After much jolting on our previous long journey, we were, however, to move all the way to Rotterdam, without any jolting whatsoever, namely, in a so-called yacht, a kind of *treckschuyt*, with its attendant steersman and crew, whom I had engaged at Mayence by contract for the occasion. Mademoiselle Ostheim, a relation of Sir Thomas Cator, at the Hague, joined our party and insisted on bearing her share of the trifling expense.

I might, of course, write a very long chapter about the Rhine. There is no town or castle from Mayence to Düsseldorff, that is not yet as clear in my remembrance as it was twenty-nine years ago, after I returned to Edinburgh. But *now*, when the "castellated Rhine" has become better known or more talked of in Cockney-land than the Trossachs or Westmoreland lakes, my reminiscences, I suppose, may well be spared. As to the historical lore, the annalistic wealth of the country, I fancy John Bull remains as

ignorant and indifferent as ever. Senator Voght's admirable history of the Rhine, in three large octavos, like thousands of other good books, remains as unknown in England at present as it was in 1821. But to own the truth, my impressions derived from those romantic objects were at best, and at the moment, more like those of a dream than of reality. The Rhine was visited, and yet the previous dream remained unbroken. Under other circumstances, I would gladly have stopped at St. Goar or Andernach, or anywhere, in order to reconnoitre at leisure — to explore, one by one, the mouldering castles, and try to resuscitate, in imagination, their inhabitants from days of lang syne, and their modes of life. But my thoughts were then fixed on home.. We embarked every morning after breakfast, our steersman at first wondering why we made our appearance so late, till he became accustomed to English manners, and we floated down the river till dinner-time—in the evening—when a friendly reception always awaited us at some of the numberless *gasthofs* on shore. Imitating for once the prudent conduct of Lord Gardenstone in his travelling memoranda, I may observe that, at no one of these places did we meet with any instance of that impudent extortion and imposition to which we had been subjected on our way from the north. At Königswinter, for example, which was our last German station except Düsseldorff, we had dinner, tea, supper, apartments, and breakfast for eight persons, including eight bottles of excellent wine, the charge for all which fell within one pound sterling. Nowadays,

when foreign tourists abound, and the old convent at Nönnenwerth has been turned into a *gasthof*, and subsequently into an English hydropathic-hospital, probably one's expenditure would be very different.

With Düsseldorff, a *ci-devant residenz* in its decadence, was wound up my experience of resting-places in Germany. I thought it a dull place then, contrasting as it did with crowded and thriving Frankfort, and not even boasting such venerable trees as those are in the park at Weimar. But with all its dulness how welcome would be to me such an asylum now! I recollect my morning's walk in the prince's park; how bright the trees were in their verdure of May, how cheerfully the gardeners worked, getting rid of the last *debris* of the preceding winter. It was the last place at which I witnessed the pleasant, courteous manners of Germany; every one saw that we were strangers, and instead of passing with a silent, sulky stare, *à la mode Anglaise*, every one was ready with a salute, by doffing hat or cap, and with a *guten tag*, in the tone of cordiality and welcome. These pleasant manners entirely disappeared after we passed the frontier into Holland, of which country, to own the truth, my recollections are not favourable. Towards the late afternoon or evening, after our daily voyage, we no longer met with ample provisions, or even with a friendly reception; on the contrary, as our steersman indignantly said, nothing but "*lumperei und prahlerei*," in plainer terms, "penury and pretension," by the second of which terms I suppose he referred to the gay aspect of the towns and hamlets externally, which, with their bright brick walls,

and painted shutters and casements, contrasted with the green dykes, came out very imposingly.

At one of those places, on a Sunday, we were refused reception under any roof, but having contrived to purchase eggs and potatoes, our steersman cooked these in his own cabin. I had brought from Frankfort a Westphalia ham, which, for pastime, I now cut down into sausage-meat, and at length, the potatoes being boiled, I bruised them down into the hash, then incorporated the eggs, seasoning the whole with pepper, mustard, vinegar, and Harvey's sauce. Truly it was a large and noble pudding, and having on board a hamper of excellent wine, we fared sumptuously.

Next morning, our voyage abruptly ended, for in Holland the weather, as well as the people, proved surly. A contrary wind rose in such degree, that with the stoutest rowing we could not make way against it. It became advisable, therefore, to leave the boat and luggage to the care of our good Germans, to reach the goal as they best could; and having with some trouble found two jingling rattle-traps with post-horses, we proceeded along the dykes to the Bath Hotel, in the Boompjes, at Rotterdam.

I have little to record of that dull town, whose murky, muddy vitality is exclusively derived from the spirit of pelf and commercial speculation, but where, in obedience to a similar spirit, we were detained for ten days, until our old acquaintance, the *Elbe* smack, from Leith, had time to take in her complement of heavy merchandize. I disliked the country, and the people's manners, therefore made no excursions except to the Hague, where we spent one day and even-

ing pleasantly enough, Sir Thomas Cator accompanying us in our walks, and dining with us afterwards. Sir Thomas, I believe, was a native of Holland. At all events, he had the most thorough command over its language, which, to my amazement, he insisted was not inferior to Greek either for sound or expression. More especially during our walk through the green alleys to the "Maison de Bois," he insisted on the superiority of Dutch poets to those of every land, ancient Greece alone excepted. Truly I wondered at his tenacity of memory, as in a thundering voice he recited for my edification long passages in verse, the drift of which I could understand tolerably well, having, at Frankfort, taken a superficial course of Dutch with Baron Amsberg. The "Maison de Bois" dwells in my remembrance on account of the celebrated Rubens' chamber, a sort of panorama, of which few descriptions are current, I suppose because it is indescribable and unique. The visitor enters; the door closes behind him, and as such is no longer distinguishable. The outer world is utterly excluded, and he is left under the influence of that formidable world created by the great painter and his pupils. He sees nought but its gigantic forms, which start into life with all the force of reality. From their *vraisemblance* these forms are almost appalling even at mid-day; how much more mysterious must be their effect if contemplated by the uncertain light of evening! But I shall not attempt to describe the room more minutely. "Death on his pale horse" haunts me!

Once more away, away! We embarked at Rotter-

dam one fine afternoon towards the end of May, and our facetious captain, more venturous than wise, preferred taking the short cut by the Brill, where the water is too shallow for vessels so heavily laden and of such dimensions as the smack *Elbe* happened to be. The evening was still tranquil when, about ten o'clock, I accompanied the captain on shore, whither he went to get his papers finally signed by the authorities at the Brill, and to bring on board a pilot. Soon afterwards we retired to sleep. At half-past two all were forcibly awoke by a strong gale of wind and torrents of rain, also by a portentous stamping and shouting over head. Twice, thrice, four times did our vessel strike or graze violently on the sand-banks, yet each time passed over unscathed. I fancy that a shipwreck has seldom been more narrowly escaped than on that occasion, and the effects of the concussions, though not fatal, were neither pleasant nor wholesome. The vessel shook, quivered, and groaned in every timber. On account of the heavy sea and rain, all hatches were closed down. The mephitic air from the disturbed bilge-water, became suffocating and deadly. In proof of its poisonous quality, after our arrival in Leith, every watch, every ornament, every piece of money, however well secured in purse or pocket, was coloured black, tenacious black, which could not easily be effaced. But our ship was tight and strong, and the wind, though stormy, was fair; *that* saved us, and by the afternoon of the next day we had recovered from sea-sickness and were already in sight of the English coast.

On our arrival at the Firth of Forth it was crowded

with vessels, which were prevented from sailing out by the same gale which brought us so rapidly home. One of the friends who dined with us on board on the day of our departure, last year, kindly made his appearance in a fishing-boat, and dined with us again betwixt five and six on the day of our return. It is superfluous to say, that we felt glad and joyous when, in the evening, we were once more established at "Auld Reekie," where a furnished lodging was found on the spur of the moment, my own house being at that time let to the Earl and (so-styled) Countess of Portsmouth.

Old friends crowded round us. Every one received us with kindness. I believe few individuals of insulated character and retired habits have been more favourably regarded than I was then at Edinburgh. Pecuniary cares, indeed, began to threaten, but these were unknown except to our men of business. The first to welcome and invite us was Mr. J. G. Lockhart, with whom I dined the next day to meet my good old collaborator the Ettrick Shepherd. All matters wore *couleur de rose* at that time. In the evening, Mrs. Lockhart had recourse to her harp, and with great good-will and vivacity chaunted her father's favourite ballads. The well-known tones of her "Kenmure's on and awa," and "Bannocks o' Barley," dwell on my mind's ear as vividly as if the meeting had taken place only yesterday. The music dies not, though the harp is broken. And yet our so-called world of that day has vanished for ever, its bright colouring all faded, like the leaves and blossoms of the then transitory spring.

Having just now mentioned the Ettrick Shepherd, whom I was glad to find in his accustomed mood of joyous contentment, I avail myself of an occasion, to add a few words respecting one of his earliest advisers and friends, who, accompanied by Mr. Blackwood, happened to sup with us one evening shortly after our return; I mean James Gray, author of "Cona," a poem, and various other productions, which I fear are now as much forgotten as the autumnal leaves of the year 1822. Gray was one of the masters of the High School at Edinburgh, and in that capacity was most attentive to his duties and highly respected. He was an excellent Greek scholar, a veritable enthusiast in all his undertakings, and a man of original genius. He married Miss Peacock, a poetess and voluminous letter-writer, who had, I think, been acquainted with Burns. Gray himself had that honour, and among poor Burns's associates was perhaps the only man surviving who had any pretensions to literary talent. Hence, Mr. Wordsworth addressed to him his letter on the character of our national poet, which was published in the year 1815 or 1816. For genius, or even the semblance of genius in every phasis, James Gray felt the most sincere and ardent sympathy. He seemed always on the watch for its demonstrations, and his humble abode at St. Leonards, especially at the dinner-hour, became a sort of rendezvous or club-house for *soi-disant* poets, some of whom little deserved his patronage. Greatly to his honour, James Hogg often remonstrated, but in vain, against the expense and inconvenience of such hospitality, by which he him-

self would not profit except sparingly, and which he too truly predicted would one day lead to serious embarrassment. There was another point of difference betwixt them, which sometimes led to ridiculous disputes. Truly zealous for the honour and fame of the Shepherd, Gray wished him to read and study, as well as to write, and directed his attention to the fact that Shakspeare, though risen from the station of a link-boy, and self-educated, became possessed of extensive acquirements and learning. But James Hogg was obdurate in his contempt for books, whether old or new. Not even the example of Shakspeare, nor the exaggeration of the implied compliment, could propitiate him. He would work out his own reveries upon the "sclate," after his own fashion, and this was all. Nevertheless, he took up by rote divers of Gray's Latin phrases, and in his prose writings used to table them at hap-hazard.

Worthy James Gray! He rose early and studied late. He was generous and high-spirited;—"obscurely wise and coarsely kind." His greatest luxury or happiness was when, during the long vacations, he could set out, accompanied by his wife, in long pedestrian excursions through the remote Highlands. But he had a family, as well as a squad of parasitical genii to provide for. Embarrassments thickened at last, as Hogg had predicted; and, as usual in such cases, he found in the hour of adversity that he was "no prophet in his own land." He gave up his appointments, and with strong testimonials in his pocket, as to learning and moral worth, came to London, where by some means or another, he suc-

ceeded in obtaining a clerical employment in the East Indies; after which I heard no more of him, except that he and his wife soon died there.

Among Gray's *anhänger*, or dependents, to whom I have alluded, there was one named William Scott Irving, who came to me in 1814, recommended (though with a *caveat*) by Sir Walter Scott, as an amanuensis. He wrote and published a long poem, with notes, entitled "Fair Helen of Kirkconnel," dedicated to Sir John Heron Maxwell; from whom, doubtless, he expected patronage; but, I suppose, that worthy Baronet worshipped more steadily at the shrine of Plutus than of Apollo; for I did not hear of any wealth flowing from his coffers into the empty purse of the poet. Irving covered reams of paper with his various productions, in prose and verse; yet all that he wrote bore the fatal stamp, not of plagiarism, but of undeniable imitatorship. Almost invariably he laboured to make a ballad or a book in the style of Scott or Byron, but *haud passibus equis.* Supposing, however, that he had come nearer to his models, his reception would not have been any better. Our wise public were contented with Scott and Byron, and by no means wanted to see a reduplication or double of either in the person of Mr. Irving. He had a wife and family, this poor man, and thought to support them by serving pertinaciously at the Muses' shrine. But, seemingly, neither the Muses nor any one else cared a straw about his services. At length he sank into the most abject poverty; yet, if on any day he found some one ready to do him the "God-like favour" (his own phrase) of administer-

ing a "pound note," he would instantly set himself at his desk again, and work night and day for the next week. Over and over I tried, as Gray and others did, to get him regular employment as a teacher of writing, arithmetic, book-keeping, and geometry, for which he was not unqualified; but though we succeeded in finding him pupils, his poetical propensity was a monomania that came betwixt him and every rational pursuit. Again and again he applied by letters to his friends for pecuniary aid, till the notion of his real miseries was obliterated, and they thought of him only as a persevering mendicant. I cannot accuse myself of having ever in any instance repulsed his applications; as little did Sir Walter Scott or James Gray, but others did, especially those who were best able to help. The end was, that one morning he wound up his reckonings for this world, precisely in the same method, and with the same sort of instrument, which Lord prime minister Castlereagh adopted about the same epoch. Rather sarcastically James Hogg observed, that for once in his life William Irving had shown good sense, inasmuch as the act of suicide was the only effectual step he could take in order to please the world, whom for years past he had striven in vain to propitiate. Of this poor victim Sir W. Scott once remarked, that in his opinion, "Irving had come the nearest to being a poet of any man who ever missed."

But to return: having through my whole life had a mortal hatred of lodging-houses and their landladies, I did not remain long at Edinburgh. Our German campaign had made a sad inroad on my

slender finances; but I had still "two coats," (not to speak of an advocate's gown), and two houses, one of which, namely, the cottage at Lasswade, was ready to receive us, with its peaceful green paddock and sheltering wood, where I was glad to find my faithful old dog in health, and in ecstacies at our arrival.

For such egotism now I make no apology. As an autobiography progresses, the writer becomes hardened in that iniquity. Settled down at Lasswade, I found my new literary stores so extensive that for some time I could not fix my attention on any one work in particular. Already during our short year's absence, the state of literature in Scotland had assumed somewhat of a new phasis. Remuneration to authors had become more than ever liberal. Mr. Blackwood and his Magazine had attained nearly the zenith of their prosperity, and volunteer contributions, which he treated *de haut en bas*, showered upon him from all quarters. Among his new allies, John Galt held a distinguished place; having, doubtless, exhibited a notable vein of originality, inasmuch as he contrived, by a quaint style of eccentric *naïveté*, to render even the merest platitudes diverting. I suspect such productions would not *tell* equally now-a-days, but at that time, his "Ayrshire Legatees," and other works of the same class, were very popular. For once the old maxim was reversed; for with him easy writing made easy and pleasant reading. He might, therefore, well suppose, as he too rashly did, that the road to fame and wealth by literature was open and smooth before him; for he could have scribbled such things, *ad infinitum*, and

found no end to the ridiculous exhibitions of Scottish character and phraseology in which he delighted.

I have already remarked, rather querulously, how few in number are the characters one meets with during a long life, that deserve any special commemoration. Galt's career was the more remarkable, as he took to literature under circumstances which, though not strictly analogous to those of the Ettrick Shepherd, might be considered almost equally unfavourable, for he was educated exclusively for pursuits of trade and commerce—was, in his literary capacity, self-educated, and to scholastic acquirements made no pretension; yet, having once commenced as an author, he showed no little *verve* and perseverance. He cared not for obstacles nor failures, and one of his favourite maxims was, that book-making being at best a kind of lottery chance, he could by merely keeping the pen in hand, begin and end a work in less time than a fastidious author would consume in laying his plans and debating *how* the thing was to be done. But in the various works published for him by Blackwood, he could by no means be stigmatized as a mere book-maker, for in all of them were traces of observation on real life and manners; and they were attractive accordingly. Some years later, and for other publishers, he carried his principles of composition *à l'outrance*, by finishing no less than three romances, or novels, of three volumes each, in little more than six months. For the first of that mechanical series I believe he received 500*l.*, and he reckoned on an equal sum for the second and third. When, with the freedom of friendship, I remon-

strated against this fatal facility, he answered briskly, "Where's the harm?—It answers a temporary purpose both of author and publisher. As to reputation, posthumous fame, and all that sort of thing, you little suspect how much I shall accomplish within two or three years more!" At that date (about 1824), he seemed to indite books as readily and pertinaciously as he would have scribbled mercantile letters, and often averred to me that his literary resources were far greater in extent than those of Sir Walter Scott or any other contemporary;—moreover, and on the faith of these plans, he had bargained for, or actually purchased, a small property on the sea-shore, I forget in what county. And there, for his home and *studio*, his *pied à terre*, he intended building a veritable fortress, a petty stronghold, exactly in the fashion of the oldest times of rude warfare. It was to be a miniature edition, or single tower of Dunstaffnage, or Dunnottar, I believe, and was to stand upon a rock, near enough to be washed by the sea spray, where in safety he could contemplate from his windows the grandeur of the storm. He had arranged even the details of his future *menage*, even to the stock of wines wherewith he would open his cellar, and the number of select friends who were to be welcomed!

I do not doubt that all this would have been realized, had not Galt's disposition, strange to say, been as versatile as it was obstinate. *Malgré* the attention which he bestowed on novels and magazines, he was always revolving questions political and statistical. He had parliamentary friends, whom he well knew how to retain. He appeared always at his

ease and independent, kept lodgings constantly in Downing-street, had great placidity and amenity of manners, and looked and talked very wisely. All of a sudden, when he appeared settled, *en famille*, at Eskgrove, (once the home of a judge who bore that title), he disappeared from our literary circles, having obtained from Government a good appointment (a commissionership of some sort or another) in Canada. The next I heard of Galt was, that, from causes which are detailed in his autobiography, he had got into disputes with authorities at head-quarters. Regardless of his immediate pecuniary interests, he quitted his post, and, in order to have his grievances redressed, he came back to London, where, shortly after his arrival, he was arrested for a debt of eighty pounds, claimed (as Dr. Maginn informed me) either by the Rev. Dr. *****, or by some one of the doctor's learned and amiable family.

Doubtless, had the worthy creditor been cross-questioned, he would have disclaimed the slightest shade of animosity or hostility towards Galt, whose character for probity and fair dealing was unimpeachable, and would have pleaded that he desired nothing more nor less than strict justice, and the assertion of his rights according to law. I was in London then, and I remember how differently Galt viewed the question. In his opinion legal power was one thing, but right or justice another. The result of this proceeding was, that, in *dour* silence and with imperturbable stoicism, he suffered a long confinement, during which, in solitude, he wrote "Laurie Todd," in three volumes. The learned and reverend creditor

did not receive one sixpence, and Galt was irretrievably injured in mind, body, and estate. Stoicism may teach to bear, but cannot blunt painful feelings. His constitution that had appeared invulnerable, suffered irreparably from the restraint to which he had been so little accustomed. The end was repeated attacks of paralysis, with which he contended for the short remainder of his life, and for which he endured the most painful treatment in vain. Return to his official duties became out of the question, but he wrote or dictated even to his last moments. Had it not been for that amiable, just, and equitable proceeding of the reverend doctor, I feel convinced that Galt, whose death I sincerely deplore, might have survived in health and strength up to this hour.

From the outset of these memoranda, I promised to break, as often as possible, the yarn of egotism by introducing every eccentric character that fell in my way. Accordingly I must not overlook Dr. William Tennent, who for some years resided most contentedly at Lasswade, as parish schoolmaster of that humble village, and who, I presume, is living still as a dignified professor at the secluded college of Dollar. The village itself would warrant some especial notice, were it for no more than that it most probably afforded the prototype for Sir Walter Scott's "Gandercleugh." It was an easy matter for the poet's imagination to convert the ruins of the deserted old church and gloomy churchyard into the remains of an old monastery or abbey, and besides this, it was only needful to suppose that Lasswade was fifty miles distant from Edinburgh, in order to establish the

resemblance and analogy. The learned and astute Dr. Tennent, it is true, could not so well have been lowered down and degenerated into "Jedediah," but he happened not to assume his functions until after the "Tales of my Landlord" were commenced.

Strangely enough, in a laboured article of the "Edinburgh Review," William Tennent and James Hogg were classed together, though the only point of analogy betwixt them was, that they both emerged from the lowest grade of poverty. I recollect well the first demonstrations of the former as an author, when, under the *anonyme* of "William Ready-to-halt" (in allusion both to the "Pilgrim's Progress" and his own excessive lameness), he sent the first manuscript of "Anster Fair," to Doctor Robert Anderson, who gave it me to read. The doctor was puzzled, and so was I. Not perceiving and not being informed that the humorous and utterly unknown author had already studied the Italian writers of *ottava rima*, and had found among them examples of buffoonery and extravaganza, which by precedent warranted the dance of Maggie Lauder's mustard-pot, we could not imagine in what school he had *noviciated*, nor what he was driving at. I suppose the public understood him no better, but Dr. Tennent troubled himself very little about their decisions, being, in truth, far more inclined to turn into ridicule the criticisms of *soi-disant* judges, who in their luxurious elbow-chairs and surrounded by books, were not half so learned and laborious as he was in his loneliness and poverty. Truly, if a new series of that popular work "The Pursuit of Knowledge

under Difficulties" were attempted, Dr. Tennent ought to hold in it a distinguished place.

Of all the self-educated poets that I have ever known or heard of, Tennent and Hogg were in their views of literary duty the most incongruous and dissimilar. The former went even beyond my old ally, John Pinkerton, in his notions of the necessity for book-learning. He looked upon facility and rapidity of composition with a mixture of wrath and scorn, insisting that such work was no better than twisting ropes of sand, or building without a foundation. Notwithstanding his lameness and inability to move without crutches, he had marvellous strength of constitution and unconquerable spirits. Whilst at Lasswade, he rose, summer and winter, at five o'clock, in order that he might have time for his private studies before his irksome duties as pedagogue began. In the evenings he did not flag, but unless a neighbour came to partake of a jug of toddy, resumed his labours. Tennent's leading crochet was, that, by dint of lonely application, without any collaborator or any help but that of books, he would gradually command all languages, but more especially the Oriental. I have heard him complain of want of time, but never of weariness or want of power. Difficulties with him were always conquerable. He would teach himself and teach others; but his soul disdained the notion of *being taught*. One result of all this, was a very dictatorial and pompous manner of speech which I did not admire, and which our mutual friend, James Hogg, could not tolerate. But notwithstanding the peculiarities of our world, merit like his could not be suffered

to remain over-clouded in the school-room at Lasswade. I lost sight of him after he went to the college at Dollar, where I trust he still resides and is happy.

Among *literati*, what incongruous characters then resided at Lasswade! Tennent, low down in the valley, at the river's brink, occupied with Hebrew, Persian, and Sanskrit, and on the high ground above him, Captain Hamilton, under whose roof I have spent so many happy hours. The former working indefatigably in his dark, dingy abode—the latter making literary work his amusement in his *bijou* of a cottage. The latter afforded a remarkable example of a man all at once turning a popular author, who had never thought of such a thing in his life before. He began (as I have already recorded) with the most trifling *jeu d'esprit*, being some bizarre fragments from the literary productions of "Ensign and Adjutant O'Doherty." To his own great surprise these were printed, and perused with mingled wonder and mirth. From that moment, pen, ink, and paper became a source of entertainment to him, which he had never possessed before. He had wonderful facility of composition, insomuch that if he had wished to remain anonymous, the purpose would easily have been effected, for no one would have suspected him of literary habits beyond that of sitting by the fire-side to read the last review or magazine. But he found time, nevertheless, and *copy* would have accumulated on his hands, had not Mr. Blackwood come and carried it off.

How peaceful was that cottage—the same which had been the residence of Walter Scott and his wife, before he rented Ashestiel! Mrs. Hamilton, as

already hinted, made a *bijou* of her drawing-room. No duchess in the land could have arranged it more tastefully; and under that humble but classical roof, the author of Cyril Thornton took delight in receiving his friends, and in entertaining them at dinner with the best of cheer, whilst he himself, on account of infirm health, was restricted to a diet of bread and water.

At that epoch, too, one of the best, and since, one of the most distinguished of our literary men, resided occasionally at Lasswade—one who mixed not with the world, but confined himself to his own family circle, augmented only by two or three intimate friends—I mean Patrick Fraser Tytler. For amenity of manners, unconquerable patience, and unaffected kindness of heart, I have rarely known his equal. In early youth, being a pupil of my old friend Dr. Black, of Coylton, he occupied himself with Italian literature, romance, and poetry, wrote verses with astounding facility, and might have turned out a poet if he had not treated all his own productions in that way with disdain. Gradually he found his rest (so to speak) and also his proper sphere of action, by turning his matchless patience and assiduity into the track of historical investigation. In his views of character, or detail of events, he proposed to bear himself out by bringing to light, or at all events, consulting, authentic documents which were hardly suspected to exist, and which had been slumbering for ages. This was indeed an Herculean task. When I last saw him, at Edinburgh, in 1829, he expressed himself as being without hope that he could ever realise his plans.

"Day after day passed over," as he said, "during which he achieved little or nothing," and yet he persisted in working as if spell-bound." The marvel was that he kept up these habits, although constantly moving from place to place, and from one public repertory to another. His perseverance was indomitable.

Among the last of his undertakings in his own peculiar way was one which I can never forget. This was the history of the reign of Edward VI. and Mary, the materials for which he drew exclusively from the Government Record Office, which exists, I believe, in Great George-street, Westminster. Appalling, in sooth, and almost unequalled, are the disclosures therein contained, not merely of the weakness or depravity of crowned heads, but, alas, of the diabolical machinations and complicated crimes of those dignitaries by whom the said crowns were environed. But not one *iota* of these revelations depended on the authority, far less on the opinions of the historian. With perfect *naïveté* and nonchalance, he rendered entire justice to his characters; he made them speak for themselves out of their own indubitable letters; letters which, in the opinion of some people, *ought never to have seen the light.* Truly this was rather a new way of treating such grandees, and a very dangerous precedent! The freedom with which the author indulged himself in commentaries and inferences, of course made matters worse. If crowned heads of modern date and their confidential advisers were to be treated in like manner, would not royalty and the legislature be sadly at a discount? There

were not wanting individuals who thought that Mr. Tytler, instead of doing a praiseworthy thing, had taken a very unfair advantage of those departed worthies, inasmuch as their goings on, but especially their private letters, were unfit for scrutiny; in short, the less that was said about them the better!

By what motives Lord John Russell, himself a distinguished author and poet, was actuated upon that occasion, I cannot tell. But I was told by Mr. J. M. Kemble, that, to the amazement of many, the legislature thought it proper to order that henceforward the Record Office was to be closed against literary men, and against Mr. Tytler in particular. As a matter of course, this appeared to me very wrong, and under that impression, I made a hasty review of my friend's book,* wherein I sought to prove that though our state of society might be less barbarous in outward phasis, it was, radically, not a jot better now than it had been in the reign of Queen Mary. Soon afterwards I went abroad, and remaining there for seven years, had no access to know whether the archives in Great George-street remained closed, or whether any one in all the world, Mr. Tytler excepted, had patience to delve into their contents.

* "British and Foreign Review," 1839.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE AT LASSWADE.—GEORGE THE FOURTH.—DALKEITH HOUSE.—MELVILLE CASTLE.—CHARACTER OF THE LATE GLENGARRY.—CONTRAST AFFORDED BY A MODERN HIGHLAND CHIEF.—GENERAL DAVID STEWART OF GARTH.

THE reader already knows the blank verse fragment which has dwelt on my remembrance from boyhood to age—

> "A little peaceful HOME
> Is all I ask on earth; and add to this
> My book and friend, and it is happiness."

It is natural, then, that I should linger on the memory of our poor cottage and of the village of Lasswade. I might write a chapter about the pleasant walks in its immediate neighbourhood, the woods of Polton, Mavis Bank, Melville Castle,—the classic ground at Hawthornden,—the Park at Dalkeith,—the venerable trees at Newbattle Abbey (whose abbot, I believe, very comfortably apostatized in the days of John Knox, and so saved his lands),—the ruins of Borthwick Castle, the property of my stedfast friend, the late John Borthwick, of Crookstone, advocate,—the "Ghost-house" on the hill-side (respecting which I once wrote a long story), and my other favourite haunts.

But contemporary characters, not trees and houses, are the proper subject of these memoirs. In that department, and in the year 1822, I had for my near neighbour a most notable personage, namely George the Fourth. Judging by the manner in which he was then received in Scotland, in truth he must have been regarded, not merely as a crowned head, but a Magnus Apollo, of whom, therefore, even the most minute recollections must be treasures in their way. I think very differently, however, and have my doubts whether I shall occupy more than one page with the subject. In some respects, no doubt, the king's brief sojourn at Dalkeith House was rather memorable, for I believe that upon no similar occasion whatsoever were there such demonstrations of loyalty (a pet phrase), as those which took place in Scotland at this time. It was so very long since a crowned head, with all his divine rights (another pet phrase), had appeared bodily upon our shores! Perhaps it would be very ill-natured to surmise, that the homage performed upon that occasion was in some slight degree due at the shrine of our own vanity, as well as at that of our loyalty. At all events we determined to do, and did do the thing in proper style, greatly to the personal discomfort of our august Monarch, who had no notion previously how much fatigue and worry the daily ceremonials would cost him.

"Ye sud gang to the kirk, though there war nae better than a *broom cowe* in the poopit!" This was the admonition of a pious old lady to her daughter who did not attend at church regularly, and who complained that the minister was a "stupid doited bodie,"

whose sermons were not worth hearing. In like manner, and in "defence of order," we are told that we must respect the crown *as such*, independently of the particular head or heart which it covers. At this rate, and by most natural inference, the king, at all events, if not the clergyman, might be saved a deal of trouble; for upon occasions where mere outward show is needed, a properly dressed lay-figure, with the faculty of bowing its head, would answer quite as well as the veritable man. By that expedient our excellent monarch, George the Fourth, might have been allowed to sit at his window in Dalkeith Palace, trying to count the hares that sported on the bowling-green, instead of suffering, as he did, during four long hours, in a slow procession from Holyrood to the Castle, and back again to the Abbey, with no other purpose but the avowed one of sitting to be stared at, or deafened by acclamations, the roar of cannon, military bands, and all sorts of uproar. It was understood that his Majesty winced under that day's work, and declared that he would not submit to the like again.

All the world flocked to Edinburgh; people that could not obtain lodgings even, bivouacked upon the Calton Hill and Arthur's Seat, in order to assist, after one fashion or another, at the processions, the levees, the reviews, the balls, the illuminations, and so-forth. Insulated, and seemingly disloyal as we were, we never for one day left our cottage, though my wife's nearest relatives were constantly on parade, being included in the "tail" of their worthy chieftain Glengarry. But his Majesty was considerate

enough to appear one afternoon to breakfast with my near neighbour Lord Melville, which was quite as good, indeed, much more convenient for poor people, than would have been his visit at our own cottage! We walked down, as we often did, to the lawn in front of Melville Castle, and had the great satisfaction of seeing his Majesty pass in a very brisk trot, *more suo*, to and from his carriage, as if extremely solicitous to get through his work quickly and avoid observation. On the lawn, I had the pleasure of meeting the Ettrick Shepherd, accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Croly, to whom he had been introduced at Blackwood's. They were kind enough to return with us, and stayed to dinner, though my domestic *ménagé* had not yet recovered its wonted order since our return from Germany. I tried hard for information from Dr. Croly about my early favourite, Maturin, whom, up to this day, I regard as an author of extraordinary powers; but to my thinking, though the Doctor spoke of him with kindness as a companion, and fellow-student, he by no means admired his genius so much as I could have wished and expected. I fear there is not *over* much of brotherly love, or *esprit de corps* among English or Irish authors!

Of King George the Fourth and his visit I need say no more, unless it be to add, in self-defence, that my humble demonstrations of loyalty were not wanting. Our cottage was twice illuminated, and on one of those occasions I sent up so many sky-rockets, that my neighbours begged I would desist, in consideration of their thatched roofs, if I did not regard my own. The best personal memoranda which I ever

possessed of this monarch were lost long ago, namely, the veritable receipt for Carlton House punch, wherewith I was favoured by the late Sir Carnaby Haggerstone, who often partook of the hospitalities there, also, on the same authority, very curious directions for the composition of a "bishop;" lastly, instructions for the mixture and conservation of snuffs; but I do not regret the loss of these documents so much as I perhaps ought to do.

By mere chance I have mentioned Glengarry, one of the few friends whose memory I yet sincerely cherish; but who, besides, deserves special commemoration, as a character *sui generis*, moving alone in society, the only example left to us of the veritable Highland chief; one whose misfortune, as Sir Walter Scott observed, "was having been born two or three centuries too late." Under this disadvantage, it was little to be wondered at, if Glengarry was not always understood and appreciated in our working, ordinary, one-idea'd, modern world. He was intelligible among his own rocks, lakes, woods, and mountains, where every man, from the humblest *gilly* to the independent farmer or *cock-laird*, would at an instant's warning have died for him. But with the commonplace "men of the world," the cautious, plodding, sordid formulist, or the modern sprig of fashion, with his finical *mannism*, the chief was *malplacé;* as much so, as when in his full Highland costume at the coronation, he most unconsciously terrified a fashionable dame out of her wits, who thought because he wore pistols in his belt, and happened to rest his hand on one, that he had come to shoot her. She

screamed out, and pointed at the supposed assassin, who, *malgré* his explanations, was forthwith taken into custody and removed by force from the scene. The world was not wide enough to contain his anger at this indignity, or his contempt for English ignorance and *savageism*. Under such irritation he could write better than he could speak, for he was inarticulate and stammered in his wrath; so he published a long manifesto about it in the newspapers, declaring how he had worn that dress, pistols included, at all the most distinguished courts of Europe, and never was insulted before.

Undeniably, Glengarry had his faults and failings, but it is equally true that these were integral traits of his character, and paradoxical as it may sound, inseparably blended with his virtues. He was proud of his position and ancestral dignity, and would not relax in that sentiment, for he regarded it as part of the duties of a chief to be proud thereof. He was, of course, tenacious of his rights, especially of his right to boundless respect and deference as captain and commander of a great clan, duly upholding the dignity of his rank by fulfilling its functions; consequently, was always ready as gunpowder to catch fire and explode, even at the most distant indications of slight or provocation, real or supposed. During the ceremonials in honour of George the Fourth, being *en voiture* at a review, attended, as usual, by his "tail," all in their Highland costume, he started from the barouche box, and, sword in hand, challenged a whole troop of yeomanry, for presuming to encroach on what he considered his proper

station in the field, or interfere with his movements; but, luckily, their leader knew him well, and by a few mild and respectful words, turned aside the current of his indignation.

As I have said, Glengarry's faults and virtues were blended. He was courageous of course, but, to own the truth, was not merely unsusceptible of fear, but too often seemed incapable of prudential caution. It is mournful to reflect, that had it not been for the impulses of parental affection triumphing over all thoughts of personal safety, Glengarry might have been alive at this hour. He was generous and profusely hospitable, ready to help even a remote clansman with purse or with claymore, as the case might be; but his generosity and hospitality were never stinted or checked by the rigid surveillance of calculating prudence. If his yearly rents proved insufficient, he would recklessly grant a mortgage over the broad lands which he loved so well; but I cannot imagine that any amount of embarrassment would ever have led him to acquiesce in the sale irrevocably of a single acre.

I have said that he was *exigeant* of the respect due to him, as chief of an old and great clan, but, *per contra* and in return for it, he never, under any circumstances, forgot or neglected a clansman or faithful adherent. Glengarry's friendship was not of that adulterated sort which effervesces in mere *talkee, talkee,* and, on the first approach of a change of weather, turns sour. Or, in a better metaphor, he did not veer about like a weathercock, but in his friendships and affections was stedfast as the magnet amid

winds and waves, or one of his own oaks amid the wintry storms.

One of my last interviews with Glengarry was in 1821, when he requested my humble co-operation to answer or refute Clanronald, who had then the temerity to style himself Chief of Clanronald *and Glengarry*. His purpose was achieved triumphantly, I believe, by the researches of Mr. John Riddell, advocate. But of how little interest would be the revival of such discussions now! The Chief of Clanronald, whom I remember in 1811, the "glass of fashion and the mould of form," survives and is well, I believe. But, in his retirement at Tours, probably he little recks or considers whether he is or is not entitled to write the title of Glengarry as well as of Clanronald on his visiting cards!

Why the character of Highland chief has declined and faded away in *our* world is a question that might serve as the text for a long chapter. But there have been other *orders* besides this, of which we do not cherish even the *ideal* now. The titular rank of chieftain remains, and so do the forests with their wild deer, the gleaming lakes, the heaths and mountains. But his *animus*, his dignity, the spirit of concord, of benevolence, and chivalrous enterprize are gone! Hospitality of course remains, after a certain fashion. The laird (or my lord) with his large possessions, no doubt has some chosen friends whom he invites to his social board, but the notion of his adherence to them as their friend, if they fell in the world, and their "backs were at the wa'," or the notion of *their* willingness to follow

him unto the death, to stick by him whether he be in the wrong or in the right, is very completely lost now. He is mindful, no doubt, of his own immediate dependents, that is to say, he will not absolutely maltreat and rack-rent his farmers, nor stint the wages of his labourers, because he has *nous* enough to comprehend that his own interest is conjoint with theirs, and that in fact he is dependent upon them. As to higher motives or principles of action, he recks not of such. The duties of a chief, as protector of his clan in all its branches, will never once interfere to break his repose. Instead of looking after his remote cousins or humble connexions, as Glengarry would have done, he will leave all such in their poverty and obscurity unregarded, cherishing, perhaps, the sentiment, "satagit rerum suarum," or "non est tanti viri." He is a man of the *modern* world this, and as such, will admit without hesitation that the "days of chivalry are gone." He speaks little or no Gaelic; he cares not about Ossian; he is so vastly wise and enlightened that he disbelieves the facts of second sight. But he is curious about "iron facts," especially about those connected with railroads, and often inquires whether this or that line is likely to pay. Moreover, he comes to town once a-year, and lives there in apartments, at the low rent of fifty guineas a week, whilst, possibly enough, his cousins aforesaid are struggling in their poverty without means for food, shelter, and raiment. He goes to dinner parties, and if he has unmarried daughters, also to balls. As to the daughters, if any one among them dared to form an attachment

to a younger brother, however amiable in character, the modern chief would show his power and paternal care by shutting her up in disgrace, or swearing never to acknowledge her again. He squanders perhaps two or three thousands in the season, that being his grand campaign for the year. Then he returns home, where his "talk is of beeves." At last he dies, unregretted, and before the arrival of the next London winter, will be forgotten "like the dust from his chariot-wheels," above which his contemptible spirit never rose.

By very natural association, whilst writing about Highland chiefs, I am reminded of another among my earliest acquaintances, also an original, and *sui generis;* one of the noblest Highland hearts,—one of the bravest and most distinguished of British officers, and who for unpretending simplicity of manners was almost unequalled, I mean the lamented General Sir David Stewart of Garth. Not long after my return from Germany, he began to collect materials for his "History of the Highland Clans," respecting which, as it progressed, he honoured me with a call now and then, saying, in his quaint manner, that "no little miss in her teens ever felt so nervous before coming out at her first ball, as he did about his first appearance as an author," conscious as he was of having much to say, but of utter inexperience in all the arts and trickery of authorship. Literary tactics were to him an unknown science. My first recollections of General Stewart, date as far back as the year 1806, when on leave of absence he came to Edinburgh, with both arms disabled, the

left cased in a box, with the bone shattered, the right, in a sling, slowly recovering from a severe flesh-wound. At that time, though in the best possible spirits, he looked pale and emaciated. The number of wounds which he sustained on various occasions, and from which he completely recovered, I suppose was in all unprecedented. He seemed to hold "a charmed life," or rather, the "vivida vis" of the Highlander was unconquerable. By the time that the wars were ended, and he could relinquish the sword for the pen, the number of his honorary crosses and medals was almost ludicrous, for if he wished to don these insignia for a grand *soirée*, his dress-coat did not afford room and verge enough for arranging them all.

I have scarcely ever known an example of a spirit so heroic and indefatigable as that of David Stewart, conjoint with such utter absence of egoistic pretension, so much humanity and kindness of heart. Even to the last, during his government of St. Lucia, he was occupied with disinterested schemes and exertions to benefit the condition of those around him. In his friendships he was unalterable, and in all his undertakings showed no less talent and judgment than enthusiastic uniformity of purpose.

At this period of my life, I was able to undergo literary application to almost any extent, and in the fatigue itself I found a pleasure. During the evenings as well as the day, I worked habitually, and what was of more consequence, everything that I then touched seemed to turn into gold. To some, it may have appeared, that the process of translation is a servile,

stupifying employment. On the contrary, I found that during a task of this kind, original plots invariably rose up unsought for; but the demand for translations being more than I was able to satisfy, my original inventions were allowed to lie over, waiting more leisure. Perceiving that the stores and their variety were inexhaustible, Mr. Blackwood estimated my possible gains at 700*l.* per annum, but as he underrated my disposition for hard work, I took the estimate at 1,400*l.*, and laid my plans accordingly. How rash and absurd this was, it is very needless to say. However, I did not neglect what was most essential, namely, to keep at work, and not allow the ink to dry in my pen. Without going to the British Museum to look over "Blackwood's Magazine," I could not reckon up the various dramatic works of which I gave specimens during those years. As to others (more numerous) which were translated, but *not published*, even in part, the manuscripts were lost to me long ago.

The summer of 1822 had passed away, and when the gloom and stillness of Autumn had settled on our woods, I would gladly have been settled also, and remained at Lasswade as my only home. I wished to avoid interruptions and useless expense, by which means I thought even the lowest estimate of my putative gains might suffice. But it could not be. Family considerations obliged me for that winter to return into Edinburgh, in order to secure the medical attendance of my friends Dr. Hamilton and Mr. G. Bell. But this was a valid reason, and I could not accuse myself of inconsistency. A formidable stum-

bling-block occurred, however, inasmuch as immediate pecuniary means were exhausted, and my agent, Mr. W—, assured me (rather sarcastically) that he had none to lend. This forced me to look into worldly affairs, and by strange chance I discovered that the little sum of 360*l.* in loose cash was really at my command, and ought to be in his possession, though it had been overlooked in his last account, and by him utterly forgotten. I took no umbrage at this, as it was a mere oversight occasioned by the hurry of important business, and felt right glad when, in the month of November, I was reinstated in my old library, in Great King-street, the scene of so many day-dreams and happy hours.

CHAPTER V.

BOOK-MAKING, AND THE LITERARY MARKET.—SIR WALTER SCOTT. —COMPARISON OF THOSE TIMES WITH THE PRESENT.—"BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE" 1822 AND 1850. — PRAISE OF OEHLANSCHLAGER'S "CORREGGIO."

I HAVE already alluded to the new phasis which literary pursuits had assumed in those days, on which at present, I reflect with some wonder; I mean especially as regards the high prices then paid even to third and fourth-rate authors. But too truly, no sooner has the notion of writing for pecuniary gain acquired *pre-eminence* in the mind of an author than his proper vocation is gone! Scarcely any intellect has energy enough to bear up under so deleterious an impression. How well has Coleridge explained this! In his words, the *hope* of encreasing worldly means by any given exertion may sometimes act as a stimulant to industry, but the *necessity*, whether real or imaginary, of such increase, will much rather prove a paralyzing narcotic. "Motives, by excess, reverse their very nature, and instead of exciting, stun and stupify the mind; for it is one contradistinction of genius from talent, that *its predominant end is always comprised in the means*, and this is one of the many points which establish an analogy betwixt genius and virtue."

About the year 1822, as is well-known, the influence of Sir Walter Scott as a romance writer was so great, that any one of his productions in that department realized in one sense, though not in another, a sum so large, that by itself alone, the produce of a single work would have been fortune enough for any prudent family! But, as is equally well known, the publisher, instead of cash payments, gave only long-dated bills. On the author's side, all the gains were invested on Abbotsford; on the bookseller's, all were pledged on grand speculations which were to realize enormous wealth one day or another, but which required expensive nursing at present. At last, the supposed realities were utterly gone, and nothing remained but bills to an amount of 120,000*l.* which, the bookseller having become bankrupt, Sir Walter Scott was called upon to pay; that very fortune for which he had laboured being thus wrested from him, and his work, like Penelope's web, having to begin anew. In 1822, the fortunes of literary men from high to low, wore *couleur de rose*, but the desire of pecuniary profit degenerated into self-imposed *necessity*, under which evil influence talents might still be shown, but the natural emanations of genius declined and faded away. Even in 1822, how different were the romances of Sir Walter Scott from those of earlier date!

The towers of Abbotsford, its pleasure grounds and woods, had been costly, not to speak of hospitality and keeping almost open house. *Per contra*, novels could be produced without cessation; but alas, the paralyzing effects of adventitious necessity became

always more and more apparent! As in the case of "Red Gauntlet," "Peveril of the Peak," and some others, four volumes instead of three were brought out, not because the story required it, but because the profits on the sale would be so much greater. and these are the *only* works of this admirable author, which up to the present hour I have not been able to peruse, inasmuch, as the contrast betwixt them and their precursors is too painfully apparent. Compare, for example, "Redgauntlet" with "Guy Mannering," or, shifting to another epoch, I might say, compare the "Lord of the Isles" with the "Lay of the Last Minstrel." On the latter occasions, the object was not so much to achieve a work which deserved to live, as to gain 10,000*l.* for a living! Unrivalled talents, artistical skill, learning, labour, and unwearying patience were visible. But the *naïveté*, the freshness, the buoyancy, the unaffected humour, or heartfelt pathos of genius, delighting in its own peculiar realities, irrespective of realizing thereby even a single guinea, were comparatively wanting.

But once introduced, this money-getting mania gained ground for a time, just as other delusions have done; for in the case of minor authors it was, of course, little better than a delusion. The British are not, like the modern French and Germans, a reading people. You cannot discover in this country as there, collections of good books even in the humblest places. John Bull will not afford the needful support for divers authors at one time; the entries in his account-book for the purchase of new works are not heavy; and he rather grudges even these. Now-a-

days his disbursements in this way are less than ever, for he insists upon having cheap literature, and can purchase new publications at the rate of one shilling per volume to any extent; and more in number than, perhaps, he will read during his life-time;—besides, he can well dispense even with these, being so amply supplied every week with penny and two-penny papers. Henceforward, Mr. Dickens's "Household Words" and "Monthly Chronicle" may succeed among the rich as well as the poor, as an ample supply both of general literature and history. If that Journal goes on and prospers, it will, assuredly, injure the sale of his "Copperfield," and his future romances. In compliance with the views of our modern public, Mr. R. H. Horne very wisely advertised his poem of "Orion," at the price of *one farthing;* John Bull eagerly grasped at the opportunity so conveniently proffered at a time when he had invested his whole capital upon railways; of course he did not trouble himself with enquiries whether the poet throve or starved, and the *extent* of the sale was unprecedented!

In 1822 we never even dreamed of such goings on; and, strange to say, even minor authors were paid and encouraged then. As a prose writer, the good Ettrick Shepherd certainly held but a very low rank; but he has recorded that about this date he received 600*l.* for two novels of three volumes each, which, according to his own avowal, were written and printed in desperate haste for the mere purpose of gain, and without any intrinsic merits whatever. Hearing of such events, Oehlenschläger prepared a romance in

three volumes, called "The Island in the South Sea," which he sent to me in manuscript to be translated for the English market, and first published among us. But alas! it contrasted fearfully with his other productions; the paralysing effects of a temporal and worldly purpose were too manifest; the poet had descended from his proper sphere in order to become book-maker, and I could not realise the purpose he had in view; besides, the manuscript came into my hands at a time of domestic affliction.

Being thus reminded of the Shakspeare of Denmark, I could not help wishing to make room for a few extracts from a drama, the least popular of all his productions in that department; but which, nevertheless, cleaves to my remembrance more than any other. Within the compass of one plot,—within one day, if I mistake not,—he has brought together *all* the incidents which tradition affords us respecting Correggio; in better words, he has condensed the annals of a melancholy life into one day's action. Whilst writing these pages I have met, unexpectedly, with a revival of Blackwood's "Noctes Ambrosianæ," in which Mr. North, apparently none the older for his load of one hundred years, has argued (if I do not misconstrue his drift) in defence of Shakspeare's "Violation of the Unities." But I humbly think the argument may be summed up in one irrefragable dictum. The poet, *as such*, moves not within the sphere out of which he selects his materials. For him, as for the priest at the altar, or man as a moral agent, *there is but one time*, the inconceivable triad, the motionless *identical* time, the same for us as for

Correggio or Julius Cæsar, wherein organic life has its changes, but wherein the rays of divine light, the emanations of genius, may be obscured but cannot die. The poet has to deal with facts, which once known endure for ever; and, with movements of the spirit, which are as little dependent on the laws of Time as on the laws of Space. Is there any reader or spectator on earth, who in sympathizing with the thoughts and emotions of Correggio, will turn his attention away therefrom in order to put the question: "'Could these thoughts and emotions, according to the laws of cause and effect, all have occurred *in one day?*" After much that seems to me not very intelligible, Mr. North says (or, I presume, intended to say, for the sentence, *as printed*, is ungrammatical, and therefore without meaning), "I will defy any one most skilful theatrical connoisseur, even at the tenth or twentieth, or fiftieth representation, so to have followed the comings-in or goings-out, as to satisfy himself to demonstration [respecting?] that interval into which a day, a month, or week can be dropped." Most assuredly the poet troubles himself not with calculations respecting the *quantum* of the said interval; inasmuch as for him Time is motionless and changeless. Instead of "violating the unities" (an old pet phrase among critics), the poet brings into force the sacred principle of unity, thereby maintaining his duties and responsibility as a spirit moving proudly aloof and above that sphere of life in time (or the time-life), out of which, nevertheless, as I have said, he has drawn his materials.

As above said, I had wished to revive here the

remarkable drama of "Correggio," and had marked several scenes to be extracted in this chapter, but my third volume is too far advanced, and I must abandon those intentions now. The author's fame, however, depends much less on this production, however meritorious, than on his "Hakon Jarl," "Hagbarth and Sigera," "Palnatoke," and other tragedies. Like Goethe in his "Tasso," and like Wordsworth in all his poems, Oehlanschläger carries to extremities his contempt for the sing-song and artifices of the so-called classical school. His thoughts and feelings are profound; but his language is the natural, unaffected language of real life. In this manner he expresses the domestic scene betwixt the poor, struggling invalid Correggio, and his wife Maria, when the former is writhing under the anguish and disappointment of a visit from Michael Angelo, who had, at first, disparaged his work. I regret that I cannot make room even for that dialogue, as it cleaves especially to my remembrance. I shall only venture to transcribe a few verses relating to the last moments of Correggio, who is introduced and faithfully followed by the poet, as the poor man is returning through the forest, and strives to carry home the price of his picture, which, out of malevolence, the prince's steward had paid to him in a load of copper coins.

"*Correggio.* How beautiful this evening is! How blue
That sky! How cool the breezes that now fan
My temples with their angel wings! Behold,
A light shower falls in the East—while from the West,
The sinking sun paints on the southern sky

The loveliest rainbow !—Oh how jocundly
The radiant *green* of Hope from the *blue* depth *
Of everlasting space beams out before me !
It seems as if in my departing hour,
For the last time, the sacred sevenfold hues
Shone forth to invite me from this twilight sphere
Unto the home of their eternal mother,
The pure unclouded light !

(*Taking the sack.*)

I lift thee up
Thou heaviest load of life, for the last time,
Thou hard and merciless Mammon ! Evermore
The soul's worst foe, but most of all, when now
Her strugglings are not earth-ward ! Thou indeed
Hadst thy revenge on me. The narrow gains
That Art obtain'd for me, have ever been
A weary load. Now, I shall live without thee !—
Oh come, Maria—my Giovanni, come !
One moment only for a last farewell !
Oh Heaven, this last of Earth's poor blessings grant me,
And I shall part in peace."

The pathos of the lines in italics may be appreciated by a poor artist, or any poor proletarian; but from the rich reader, of course, they will not extort any sympathy.

I avail myself of a half-page left in the proof-sheet to express my regret for not having room to insert some better extracts, such as might have borne out and justified my praise of this "artist-drama." It has, indeed, been among the dreams of my long unsettled life, that the Danish Shakspeare, with divers other

* In the poetical nomenclature of Denmark and Germany, *green* is ever emblematic of Hope, and *blue* of Constancy.

foreign dramatists, might yet be brought forward in England; also, that the fugitive essays and specimens to which I have often alluded, might be re-published with additions and corrections. Up to the present date, too truly, the literature of Denmark and Sweden remains unappreciated among us; and in regard to treasures of the German mines, our self-complacent public are little better provided with information than they were twenty-five years ago. And seeing that nearly 100,000*l.* have been recently subscribed for a transitory "Exhibition," I have even ventured to query whether John Bull might be persuaded to embark one tithe of that sum to establish permanently an "international literary institute," for the precise purpose of bringing under his notice foreign authors in *all* departments, who have hitherto been unknown in this country, and unjustly overlooked. This plan would, of course, comprise the establishment of a new Foreign Review, and various other provisos, of which any detail in this place is impossible.

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE AT EDINBURGH. — SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON. — MR. JOHN C. COLQUHOUN.—M. ALEXANDRE VATTEMAR.—BISHOP CAMERON.—THE LAIRD OF PITFODDLES.

On the flattering state already mentioned of our literary market, naturally enough were upreared many castles in the air. Galt's intended fortress, planned after Dunstaffnage on the rocky shore, stood not alone, but ranked among divers aërial structures which were to become strongholds one day or another, proudly overlooking the stormy waves. It was natural enough, however inexcusable, that I should partake in some degree of this delusion, but in my case the mania was very limited, for instead of building a grand *château en Espagne*, my ambition restricted itself merely to keeping over my head, if possible, the roof-tree which I already possessed. Nor could it be wondered at if I ventured to cherish this notion, seeing that without ever seeking for it, I had at that time gained some literary reputation, and that I possessed a few very sincere, and many *soi-disant* friends. Among publishers I found Mr. Blackwood a stedfast ally, and so great had become the success of his magazine, that I suppose it was reckoned a sort of literary honour to be connected with it as a contributor, and to figure occasionally in

his "Noctes Ambrosianæ," and be ridiculed in my turn under the name of "Kempferhausen." I felt, however, perfectly indifferent either to such honours or such ridicule, for it is true, that I did build *châteaux en Espagne*, after another fashion, and whilst in consequence of domestic anxieties, little or nothing was accomplished and I remained *multa et pulchra minans*, I still thought it possible that literary power and influence might attain a higher grade than ever heretofore. To all that had hitherto been achieved, even by the best of our authors, I was disposed to apply the words *nos hæc novimus esse nihil.* I thought that all existing literature was but means to an end which might yet be accomplished. As to my own employments, however humble and insignificant for the present, they might, nevertheless, prove the stepping-stone into the vestibule of a grand temple. And for such day-dreams the principal ground-work was my conviction, that for a well-regulated mind and unbroken constitution no extent of literary labour could be too great, and that the said labour might at once be regarded as a pain and yet the greatest of pleasures. I reasoned on this till I brought it into a system, fortified by examples from Alban Butler's "Lives," and during some short interviews which I had with Mr. Southey in 1824, we seemed to agree well on this point. It was to be like the "open sesame" to wondrous stores, not of translation merely, but original inventions. But, unfortunately, there were some awkward conditions attached to the basis of my aerial structures; for example, I must have unbroken tranquillity, like that of

an anchoret in his wilderness; there must be no interruption whatsoever; the "Altar of the Muses" must not be trodden by any profane step; in plainer terms, I must have my own studio undisturbed, with stores of new foreign books, and perfect command of my own time; lastly, there must be no shadow on the mind of worldly cares and perturbation, otherwise the spells would be broken.

Into all this egotism, I have been led, not in the spirit of an *egoiste*, but in order to render the remainder of these Memoirs more intelligible. It seemed necessary to show *how much* I wildly and presumptuously desired in this world, *how much* of dangerous ambition might be engendered by these few words,

"A little *tranquil* home
Is all I ask on earth,"

in order that my reader may understand how bitterly at last I was disappointed. Whilst working in the humblest capacity, I strove inwardly after *the ideal* (or rather it appeared unsought-for), but perhaps I may be reminded of the line,

"Such dreams were Shadwell's once or Oglcby's!"

Little recking what was done, I felt buoyed up by anticipations of what would be or might be done. When translations were proposed, I lost no time in selecting authors, but took the first that proved interesting, and translated right through, using a brush instead of a pen. If allowed my own way, I could usually make sixty pages per day in this manner, and when a volume was finished I bound it up

roughly, having a frame and implements for that purpose. But I regarded these manuscripts only as materials to be improved infinitely by a process of *remaniement*, whereas my publishers thought they were sufficiently good in their existing state, and eight volumes were brought out, which realized to me a considerable sum.

To make amends for being too diffuse in other places, I might pass over the years 1823, 1824, and part of 1825 almost entirely without comment, my time being divided betwixt literary occupations and anxiety caused by family illness, any records of which would be unsuitable for these pages. Hitherto I have sought to break the yarn of egotism, by recollections of those literary friends who honoured me with their notice; and among impressions of this epoch, few are more pleasant in retrospection than those of long pedestrian excursions, in company with two near neighbours, numbered still among the few surviving friends who have not changed their conduct towards me during the chance and change to which I have been subjected, I mean Sir William Hamilton and Mr. J. C. Colquhoun. Dissimilar as were the members of this *petit comité*, there was, at all events, one point on which we quite agreed, namely, in a hearty liking for long walks out of town, reckless whether the season was that of wintry storms or summer sunshine. Numberless were the subjects broached in these rambles, and numberless as the changes in Dr. Brewster's kaleidoscope, the lights and shades which they assumed under our desultory discussions. Sir William Hamilton's researches in literature generally,

but especially in that of the middle ages, had already been almost unprecedented, and I suppose have continued to progress up to the present date. But the conclusions at which he arrived (if such they could be called) were somewhat eccentric, for, according to him, all that might now be projected, had already been; there was mutation without any real progress. In his estimation the *châteaux en Espagne* of which I dreamed had woefully little chance. They were scarcely allowed to have their poor transitory being among the clouds. It was impossible to table any literary plan which he did not immediately smother by numberless references and citations, to show how much had been already done towards it without effect, his purpose seemingly being to evince that nothing of any real importance could be effected. In reality, perhaps, his object was very different. At all events the consequences were very pleasant and profitable, for by a merciless application of the principle of contradiction (*satz des Wiederspruchs*) topics religious, political, ethical, and esthetical, were discussed and investigated in a manner of which otherwise there would have been no chance. Many animated debates yet linger on my remembrance, of which the objective matter was too serious to be fitted for these hasty pages. I think Sir William Hamilton was (and perhaps is) as much inclined as the late Malcolm Laing to use the said principle of contradiction—this being necessary towards the conclusions of logic as well as of mathematics. In those days, having leisure time, he derived much amusement from the prevalent rage at Edinburgh for the doctrines of Gall and Spurz-

heim, and, for pastime he entered into a series of experiments, measurements, and dissections to prove how erroneous were their *dicta*. I remember how heartily he was diverted one morning, when on comparing Voltaire's head with mine, he found by his craniometrical process that the stupid dolt, who never uttered a *bon-mot* in his life, nevertheless possessed a bump of wit much more *prononcé* than that of the far-famed Frenchman.

I forget what his views were respecting another science not overlooked in our discussions, namely, Mesmerism, on which our mutual friend, Mr. Colquhoun (a firm believer) afterwards published his valuable work entitled "Isis Revelata." I remember, however, that the learned and wise of our modern Athens, though they leaned to Craniology, were then disposed to regard Animal Magnetism as a ridiculous delusion. According to them, it was already exploded and defunct, and any attempt to revive it would be the work of a fool, inasmuch as no rogue would be silly enough to make the experiment. Mr. Colquhoun consequently moved alone, but on that score was perfectly indifferent. He remained calm, unruffled, and obstinate, on his rock of invincible truth, which of course he would not desert because he was sneered at by the ignorant or frowned upon by the fanatical.

Sudden transitions may well be pardoned in memoirs like these. As included under my recollections of this period, I shall name two individuals, in character and station rather incongruous it is true, one being the late Bishop Cameron, of Edinburgh, the other my worthy and stedfast friend, M. Vatte-

mar, of Marlé-le-Roi, near Paris, who was first introduced to me by the venerable Bishop, and who, in 1823, was celebrated throughout Europe as Alexandre, the ventriloquist. "Populus vult decipi et decipiatur." The career of Alexandre was, for divers reasons, almost unexampled and unique, first, on account of the perfection to which he had brought his art; secondly, his unparalleled success; lastly, from the extreme incongruity of his own personal character with the employments to which, as a *gagne-pain*, he then submitted. M. Vattemar, who, when at Edinburgh, seemed about twenty-five years of age, was well-born, and well-educated; he himself entertained a dislike and repugnance to theatrical exhibitions, and of all modes of life would have preferred retirement in the country with his amiable wife and family. But naturally he had great vivacity of spirit, and he possessed the power of many voices or vocal illusion in a degree which I suppose has not been equalled before nor since, and what at first was only an amusement in his early days, at school or college, became afterwards a source of great pecuniary gain. His prepossessing countenance (Lord Chesterfield's perpetual letter of recommendation) his agreeable manners and stores of anecdote would alone have made him everywhere a welcome guest. But the most marked point of all was the contempt which he expressed for his own performances, not of course for their success, or the attention which was always paid to him, but for his profession as a public performer, which was uncongenial with his disposition, and which he stigmatized sometimes as that of a juggler or

mountebank. The power which he exercised was, nevertheless a natural gift; and if contempt were due, it was not to his employment, but to our excellent world, who then, as at present, were much more willing to be amused than instructed.

Of this I remember some notable evidence. For example, in 1823, bringing, according to his custom, divers letters of introduction respecting his vocal powers, Alexandre waited on a late eminent prelate, by whom he was received with great kindness and condescension. During the interview, his lordship having occasion to write a few lines, found himself annoyed and discomposed by a fly rather too industriously buzzing in his wig, and so thoroughly convinced was he of its reality, that the deception would have passed undiscovered, had not Alexandre in his quaint English, said, "My lord, I catch him; he won't come again no more." Herewith the venerable dignitary was so delighted, that he invited the artist again and again to his house, showed him every attention, and interested himself warmly for his professional success. Fifteen years thereafter (in 1838), Alexandre came back to London, chiefly occupied in a very different pursuit, namely, a scheme for the promotion of arts, sciences, and literature, by a new system of exchange betwixt the public institutions and artists of one country and those of another. This cosmopolite plan was well arranged, and its details were too complexive to admit of explication here. But he had made extensive progress before coming to London, had traversed the whole of Germany, where he was most favourably received, had

made a large collection of works of art, and brought with him numberless letters of recommendation. Among these, was a long testimonial from the truly amiable and learned Archbishop of Paris, strongly eulogising the undertaking.

In the year 1823, had he wished for it, the tall folding doors of every aristocratic house in London would, I suppose, have been flung open at the name of Alexandre. At that time the Adelphi Theatre, during a long season, was crowded every night by audiences, "fashionable and select," all eager to see and to hear the ventriloquist alone. But as M. Vattemar, organizing a scheme for the advancement of literature and art, he met with a very different reception. Under the conditions of his plan, it became necessary that it should be submitted to the identical dignitary already mentioned, who now officiated as the principal guardian and custodiar of the British Museum. To this venerable prelate, therefore, Vattemar betook himself with the testimonial from the Archbishop of Paris, already mentioned, and other documents, humbly requesting his Grace's sanction, and, if it were not inconvenient, the honour of a short interview. But the tall doors were no longer obedient; the "open sesame" was wanting; the oil of 1823 had dried on their hinges. The ventriloquist might have been welcome still, perhaps, but the unknown *litterateur* was not. In short, the only result was a note from his grace, written by a secretary in few words, returning the credentials, and politely expressing regret that M. Vattemar should have taken the trouble of calling,

seeing that, from the pressure of important business, his lordship had no time to attend to *such* matters.

The flattering estimate which M. Vattemar had before formed of England and the English was, I fear, sadly shaken by that last campaign. His reception here was not so favourable as it had been in Germany. He remained but a few weeks in London, and did not think it advisable to try the Modern Athens. For my own part, I humbly thought that if he had revived his rogueries of Nicholas for the English public, a path might thereby have been opened for the cosmopolite *littérateur*, as a sort of bye-play or underplot, and I felt convinced that if without any testimonials or reference to the British Museum, our friend, when at the palace door, had merely presented his card with the name of Alexandre, the good archbishop would have remembered "days o' lang syne," and desired to hear the fly buzz in his wig again, and would possibly have invited the performer to partake of turbot and haunch, with a bottle of orthodox old wine.

At Edinburgh, Alexandre's success was brilliant and unprecedented. His facilities in realizing money were far beyond those of any author that ever lived among us, only the career did not last long. The performance, it is true, was exhausting, and in that respect no easy matter, but with his youth and vivacity, he could afford to "tire and begin again." For twelve alternate nights he played at the Caledonian Theatre, which was regularly crowded, and, deducting rent, the net profits were, I suppose, about 1000*l*. The written testimonials of admiration in

prose and verse which he had received were numberless, and filled divers folio scrap-books. Out of sight, the best of these contributions was a copy of verses presented to him at Abbotsford by Sir Walter Scott, a *jeu d'esprit* so happy and excellent in its way, that if a copy were at my command I should perhaps insert it here.

The transition from recollections of Alexandre to the memory of the venerable Bishop Cameron is not by any means forced or far-fetched, for his friendly reception of the *Artiste d'illusions vocales* was only one among numberless instances of his characteristic accessibility, urbanity, and kind disposition towards strangers, or, I should rather say, towards all the world; for I do not think he could *in heart* have been severe and harsh even to the unworthy. *Apropos*, I recollect his words on an occasion when I was personally interested: "If A. B. and C. D. have acted thus wrongfully, there is so much more need that we should *pity* and *forgive* them." In the present instance, though he recked little of ventriloquism, wore no wig like his reformed brother in London, and by the rules of his order was prevented from going to the theatre, *per contra*, he found in his visitor a well-educated and amiable man, to whom, therefore, and to whose family, he would willingly render any service within his power. Divers times, according to my own knowledge, this kind disposition was trespassed on by strangers, who introduced themselves, or brought very doubtful credentials; but even when he discovered their defects or deceptions it rarely moved

him to anger. Even to the last, he rather sought to find excuses for their conduct, and to argue that perhaps they were not in reality so bad as they seemed.

If in Ireland, for a long series of years, the Catholic clergy were proscribed and persecuted like criminals, in Scotland, for an equal length of time, their order was so limited in number that it seemed almost extinct, and their poverty was extreme. For many years the only dwelling-house and chapel of the clergy at Edinburgh, were in a hideously dark and narrow lane, called Blackfriars'-wynd, in the old town. And although in 1823 there existed a new chapel, the domicile of Bishop Cameron and his coadjutors was of the humblest order, — a gloomy lodging in a neighbouring close. Under that lowly roof might be found a degree of courtesy, benevolence, generosity, and zeal to do good in matters both temporal and spiritual, such as I have reason to believe cannot often be met with in our exemplary world, with whom, nevertheless, in the course of these long rambling records I have made it a principle not to quarrel. How often these Christian characteristics may be discovered in the palaces of English prelates, I, not being able to speak from personal observation, pretend not even to conjecture.

Like my friend and instructor, Father Wallace, Bishop Cameron had spent the best of his days in Spain, and principally at Valladolid, where, I think, he was president of a college. Without being himself an author he had studied profoundly, and the result of his studies was to render him a Christian in

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the fullest and most complete sense of the term. He made allowances for error—he was liberal and expansive in his views—charitable, indulgent, an enemy to forms and ceremonies, considered *as such;* and I never knew him censure with bitterness any but the cold-hearted and selfish. On one of these occasions he wound up by saying, "But it is too true that A. B. has no *head*, and that being deficient how can we expect much *heart*?" In tones, accent, and manner of utterance, he was staid, severe, and even dictatorial; but this was only the *mode.* The substance was ever kind, considerate, and benevolent. He held that the Christian character must be entire, *totus et integer*,—otherwise it perished like a so-called mathematical figure with a broken line. Especially it was with him a leading principle, that "faith without good works is dead." Again and again I have heard him indicate from the pulpit that the external observances of the Catholic ritual were but "means to an end;" and that if the end were not attained by the establishment of charity, fraternity, and self-sacrifice, the attention to externals, instead of being a merit or plea in extenuation, was only deceptive, and, therefore, among the worst of sins.

Accordingly, in his own practice of good works, he was ever indefatigable wherever distress existed, whether it were from perturbation of mind, poverty, or illness, he did not, if appealed to, reply in the cold words of the formulist, that temporal affairs were not within his sphere; on the contrary, he would on all such occasions console, advise, and aid, taking on himself temporarily, as well as spiritually, the duties of a father

In this benign spirit he sometimes succeeded in healing family dissensions, where wise men of the world would probably have made matters worse, and in raising people of broken fortunes out of the dust; though he himself did not abound in worldly wealth, but had nothing but good-will and prayers, and counsels to give. But these alone have great power, and at such times he realised the old maxim, "where there is a will, there is a way."

I have said more than once already, that there is no better test of a man's real character than by observing how much of real and heartfelt regret is manifested at his death.

> How is it that Death with the mighty deals,
> With the titled, the rich, and the gay?
> They are gone like the dust from their chariot wheels
> As proudly they swept on their way!

I believe scarcely any one in high estate was ever so widely respected in life, and lamented in death, as Bishop Cameron in his humble abode at Edinburgh; his conduct and example, in so far as they could be made known, had been such as utterly to break down that barrier of prejudice which once existed, and too often still exists, betwixt Catholics and Protestants. From the latter he commanded respect as much as from the members of his own church. His funeral was attended by people of all ranks and creeds, by men in high official stations at Edinburgh, who felt anxious to pay this last tribute of respect for his character and memory. These were public and visible demonstrations; but far more numerous were the

mourners among the poor in unsuspected places, whose tears and prayers followed his remains to the grave; and, though unseen and unheard on earth, were assuredly recorded in heaven.

By very natural association, whilst tracing these lines respecting Bishop Cameron, I am reminded of one of my earliest friends, to whose society I was accustomed from boyhood, and who was among the first visitors that I received after my father's death, in 1808. In many respects the late John Menzies, of Pitfoddles, was a most notable character. Excepting my wife's uncle, Mr. Leslie, of Balquhain, he happened to be the *only* member of the Catholic church in Aberdeenshire who possessed large landed property. Mr. Leslie and his family lived in retirement within their own selected circle: not so the laird of Pitfoddles. He entered very freely into convivial society, and was indefatigable in his attendance at county and parish meetings of every description. On these occasions he never failed to take an animated part in the debates; and I remember once a stunning though transitory effect produced by his response at a contested election. The discussions, before coming to the vote, had been long and turbulent, and Mr. Menzies had spoken again and again in seemingly fierce dispute, though, in reality, he never lost temper. At last the roll was called over, and this duty happened to devolve on an English barrister, by whom the Catholic laird was quite unknown. To his utter amazement, therefore, Mr. Menzies, responding to his name, said, with rather severe emphasis, "I do not vote, sir!"—"What? after such marked demon-

stration of political opinions and preferences—" "I do not vote, sir," reiterated the laird, with increased emphasis, but without one word of explanation. "Disabilities—he is a Roman Catholic,"—whispered in the ear of the reader, put an end to this *embarras.*

In convivial society, as well as at public meetings, Mr. Menzies took his part in such manner that no one would have discovered from his conversation that he was a catholic, and, *as such*, proscribed. In those days, as afterwards, the voice of Sidney Smith was powerfully raised in support of emancipation, and after the appearance of "Peter Plymley's Letters," the efforts of the "No Popery" party were redoubled. Pamphlets flew about in all quarters, and "broadsides" were distributed gratis. I remember a certain Lady G—, of E—, had arrived from Edinburgh, and Mr. Menzies from Aberdeen, on the same day, at a strange old-fashioned watering-place among the Ochill Hills, called Pitkaithly. Her ladyship had been supplied, *en route*, with one of those "broadsides," and after dinner, at the bottom of a long table where the laird acted as croupier, she requested him to read it aloud for the edification of the company. This he immediately proceeded to do. My father, who happened to preside at the other end, feeling uneasy at the blunder, interrupted him, but in vain. Pitfoddles obstinately persisted in his task to the end. In his own words afterwards, "there was nothing in it but a string of absurdities and falsehoods which had already been uttered, exposed, and refuted thousands of times, and which could have no influence

except among the invincibly ignorant, on whom reasoning or assertion of the truth would be thrown away."

No clergyman, neither abbot nor bishop, could be more strict and conscientious than Mr. Menzies in the fulfilment of every duty enjoined by the ritual. He stickled for the minutest observances, but not for one instant did he imagine or admit that religious duties began and *ended* there. On the contrary, he held that "Christianity, if sincere, must *kythe*," a forcible expression in the North, meaning that "Faith must demonstrate its life by good works." I have had some reason to suspect that the number of wealthy men who apply and carry out this maxim as he did, is excessively limited. From an acquaintance of thirty-seven years, I feel convinced that he never became aware of distress or difficulty without exerting himself to relieve it. Moreover, I am quite sure that during his long life he never sheltered himself under that favourite axiom, "It is of no use stopping one hole in a sieve," nor as a set-off, pleaded his multifarious engagements, truly as he might have done this, seeing that at his own cost he built chapels, schools, and colleges and that his house was ever a rendezvous and home for clergymen non-attached to any particular cure. Temperate, simple, almost ascetical in his own habits, I doubt if his personal expenses, taken strictly as such, ever exceeded 150*l.* per annum; but his generosity was unbounded. He would contribute 500*l.* to assist a friend in distress more readily and cheerfully than another land-owner of double fortune would have administered five pounds.

So many and various were these acts of strictly private benevolence, that his hereditary fortune was encroached upon; but of this he recked not, for he had still *satis superque* — enough to live upon and to spare.

Unavoidably and naturally, this disposition, like the courtesy of Bishop Cameron, was sometimes abused. On one of these occasions, a friend having rather officiously inquired whether he had rendered any assistance to A. B., to which he replied in the affirmative: "Then," said the querist, "you have been grossly imposed upon." "And pray, my good friend," rejoined the laird, "*how* do you know this?" "Merely because I am able to prove that A. B. is not the person she pretends to be." "If that be all, you are quite deceived as to my share in the matter. I ascertained the fact of her present poverty which was undeniable, and as to the story of birth, parentage, and connexions, I took no interest in it whatsoever. I gave a trifle in common charity, upon the *chance* of doing good. I was not lending a sum upon the credit of the applicant's connections or ancestry."

Of this early and stedfast friend I shall only add one more characteristic anecdote. In the year 1826, during a walk with Mr. Menzies, at Edinburgh, I happened to express great and irrepressible anger at the conduct of certain individuals, to which my venerable monitor replied by mild remonstrance. With increased irritation, I said that were it possible by any efforts of ingenuity to discover excuses for their conduct, I would willingly do so, but without tram-

pling on and renouncing the distinctions betwixt right and wrong, I could not think nor speak of them otherwise than I did." My friend stopped abruptly. "In other, and plainer terms," said he, "it comes to this, that you could readily enough forgive these people *provided there were nothing to be forgiven!*"

CHAPTER VII.

THE CITY IN "THE PANIC."—SIR WALTER SCOTT'S DIARY.—EFFECTS OF "THE PANIC" IN VARIOUS QUARTERS.—MY OWN TROUBLES.—CONDUCT OF RELATIONS AND FRIENDS.—MEETINGS WITH SIR WALTER SCOTT.—HIS GOOD ADVICE, KINDNESS, AND GENEROSITY.

I HAVE written diffusely about the facilities afforded to authors, especially the *guerdon* allowed even to "supernumeraries" in those days. But towards the close of 1825, after a tranquil summer, a cloud began to lower upon their fortunes, and a change generally came over the spirit of this dreamy world. In plain terms, "the panic" approached; thereby the supplies of ready money were at once cut off, and without the slightest regard to that awkward circumstance, every one holding the position of an unsatisfied creditor, was prepared to enforce his claim without mercy.

By a strange coincidence, it was about this time that Sir Walter Scott first began to keep a diary. But it was begun in a gay spirit, before the lingering sunshine of autumn had departed, and before the clouds of "the panic" had appeared at Abbotsford. Within less than a month, the storm had commenced at Edinburgh, and thereafter he recorded its effects on himself and others minutely and from day to day.

I need not dwell upon this epoch, otherwise the

"city in the panic" might make a fitting subject for a volume, either in verse or prose, quite as well as the "city in the plague." My family were living in a hired cottage on the sea-shore near Edinburgh, when the storm loomed visibly, and I had too much reason to apprehend that pecuniary difficulties would soon interrupt the current of my employments. I do not intend filling this chapter with egotism. I wish only to afford a few hints, which perhaps may still be useful, respecting the phases of the said panic, as indicated by its effects on various characters, myself not quite excluded. I speak of events "quorum pars *minima* fui," and I would wish to record them (though as briefly as possible) "non meâ causâ sed aliorum."

From Sir Walter Scott's diary above mentioned, which has always appeared to me a model of auto-biography, I shall take the liberty of extracting one passage, which, as pre-eminently characteristic, dwells on my remembrance:—

"*Dec.* 18. — Poor T. S. called again yesterday. Through his incoherent, miserable tale, I could see that he had exhausted each access to credit, and yet fondly imagines that, bereft of all his accustomed indulgences, he can work with a literary zeal unknown to his happier days. I hope he may labour enough to gain the mere support of his family. For myself, if things go badly in London, the magic wand of the Unknown will be shivered in his grasp. He must then, faith, be termed the Too-well-known. The feast of fancy will be over with the feeling of independence. He shall no longer have the delight

of waking in the morning with bright ideas in his mind, hasten to commit them to paper, and count them monthly as the means of planting such scaurs and purchasing such wastes; replacing dreams of fiction, by other prospective visions of walks by

> 'Fountain heads and pathless groves,
> Places which pale passion loves.'

This cannot be; but I may work substantial husbandry, that is, write history and such concerns. They will not be received with the same enthusiasm; at least I much doubt, the general knowledge that an author must write for his bread, at least for improving his pittance, degrades him and his productions in the public eye. He falls into the second-rate rank of estimation:

> 'When the harness sore galls, and the spurs his sides goad,
> The high-mettled racer 's a hack on the road!'

It is a bitter thought; but if tears start at it, let them flow. My heart clings to the place I have created. There is scarce a tree upon it that does not owe its being to me.

"What a life mine has been! Half-educated, almost wholly neglected or left to myself; stuffing my head with most nonsensical trash, and undervalued by most of my companions for a time; then getting forward, and held a bold and clever fellow, contrary to the opinion of all who thought me a mere dreamer; broken-hearted for two years; my heart handsomely pieced again, but the crack will remain till my dying day. Rich and poor four or five times; once on the verge of ruin, yet opened a new source

of wealth almost overflowing. Now to be broken in my pitch of pride, and nearly winged (unless good news should come), because London chooses to be in an uproar, and in the tumult of bulls and bears, a poor inoffensive lion like myself is pushed to the wall. But what is to be the end of it? God knows; and so ends the catechism.

"Nobody in the end can lose a penny by me; that is one comfort. Men will think pride has had a fall. Let them indulge their own pride in thinking that my fall will make them higher, or seem so at least. I have the satisfaction to recollect that my prosperity has been of advantage to many, and to hope that some at least will forgive my transient wealth, on account of the innocence of my intentions, and my real wish to do good to the poor. Sad hearts, too, at Darnick, and in the cottages of Abbotsford! I have half resolved never to see the place again. How could I tread my hall with a diminished crest? How live a poor, indebted man, where I was once the wealthy — the honoured? I was to have gone there in joy and prosperity to receive my friends. My dogs will wait for me in vain. It is foolish, but the thoughts of parting from these dumb creatures have moved me more than any of the painful reflections I have put down. Poor things, I must get them kind masters! There may be yet those who, loving me, will love my dog, because it has been mine. I must end these gloomy forebodings, or I shall lose the tone of mind with which men should meet distress. I feel my dogs' feet on my knees. I hear them whining and seeking me everywhere. This is

nonsense, but it is what they would do, could they know how things may be. An odd thought strikes me — When I die, will the journal of these days be taken out of the ebony cabinet at Abbotsford, and read with wonder, that the well-seeming baronet should ever have experienced the risk of such a hitch? Or will it be found in some obscure lodging-house, where the decayed son of chivalry had hung up his scutcheon, and where one or two old friends will look grave, and whisper to each other, 'Poor gentleman' — 'a well-meaning man' — 'nobody's enemy but his own' — 'thought his parts would never wear out' — 'pity he took that foolish title.' Who can answer this question?"

On the stores for reflection both on our world as it is, and on the character of Scott, which are contained in this brief but beautiful extract, I shall not presume to comment. It affords texts enough for a volume: but I must return to my narrative.

One remarkable trait of "the panic" was, that it affected all ranks and conditions—the leading author and the humblest supernumerary—the proud banker and the poor tally-man, who had hitherto essayed to keep from his earnings a little deposit account with the great firm. Under *one* roof the commotion thus excited was a mighty affair, because the connexions of that house were so widely extended; under *another* it was comparatively a "tempest in a tea-pot," but not on that account the less fierce. As above said, not sparing any particular rank, "the panic," like the plague, was in that respect a leveller. Only the rich, or those not at all indebted, were affected

by it in a manner exclusive and peculiar. Seemingly, and in their own fancy, they were hoisted up rather than levelled; they could afford even to nurture and spread "the panic," and, like the philosophic Roman looking on the raging sea, felt their own comforts doubly, whilst they contemplated surrounding wreck and ruin. But though this might answer very well for our present world, it is rather doubtful whether it improved their chances for the next; in truth, I feel wicked enough to believe, that such respectable people were going down-hill in one sense quite as rapidly as the poorest insolvent in another.

Betwixt the plague and the panic, however, there was one marked distinction, to wit, that the former, like other epidemics, came uncontrollably like a blight, or thunderstorm. But the dark clouds of the panic, and the consequent misfortunes, were truly of man's own making. In the words of Scott, "London *chose* to be in an uproar." Our exemplary world, all of a sudden, thought it proper to turn wild and mad as a tiger cat. Poor people—debtors and creditors—instead of pulling together for mutual benefit, flew outrageously at one another's throats, whilst the rich stood by, grinned sardonically, said it was all very lamentable, and enjoyed the scene.

The mournful pages which I have extracted from Sir Walter Scott's Diary, were written under gloomy forebodings. When the storm had been matured and came in very truth, he stood up against it cheerfully and calmly. But on reflection, is it not perfectly clear that in his case there *ought not* to have been one moment's gloom or perturbation, and that there did

not arise from necessity, properly so called, but from the wildness and madness of the uproar which our amiable world of London then engendered and fostered? for in regard to his situation, is it possible to deny the following premisses?—Firstly, his official income was not menaced, it amounted to 1400*l.* per annum, and this alone was surely enough to supply the necessary requisites of life; secondly, he had the power of immediately raising 10,000*l.* on valid security, and did raise it; thirdly, his health at that time was good, and so great was his popularity, that by writing at his ordinary rate he could gain 24,000*l.* per annum!—With such indisputable points in his favour, *why* should Sir Walter have been disturbed and tormented at all? To this there is but one answer, "The panic" did it, and we made "the panic." Our excellent world would have it, and then it stalked and *rampaged* about like a Frankenstein, alarming everybody and upsetting every thing. Moral courage and self-possession might exist, but the individual gifted therewith was not for that reason protected against pressure or danger from the wild changes and commotions by which he was environed.

My extract shows how much Sir Walter Scott was moved even by his apprehension of such wild goings-on. How much more, then, did the storm affect the poor supernumerary, the proletarian, who had not the means of commanding an immediate loan—who had not any official income, and who found in the hour of need that his only resource was cut off; inasmuch as the pressure from without unavoidably distracted his wits, and interrupted his works, by which alone he

could hope to meet his engagements and maintain his family! Truly, the amount of *his* involvements might be but a trifle; but if that amount could not be obtained, it was very evident that the anxiety within his narrow home must be quite as real as that under the great man's roof, and, in some respects, more pitiable. My own plans were quickly formed. As usual in such cases, I made out a list of all debts and liabilities, without exception, and on the opposite side reckoned the amount of my remaining assets, heritable and moveable, real and putative. The result was so far satisfactory that the statement showed not only complete solvency, but, taking the property at the lowest valuation, there would be still a reversion; and in regard to literary income, Mr. Blackwood wrote a letter, as a testimonial or certificate, of his opinion how much my yearly gains might be if allowed to go on. I offered to bind myself in a legal contract to write and deliver fifty pages of *copy* per day for a year; and I could have done this, for my health was good enough then, my stores of *materiel* were boundless, and a night's rest always wore off the fatigues of the preceding day.

In my own case, therefore, there *ought not* to have been any insurmountable difficulty. I do not say this egotistically, but *causâ aliorum*, as I think these notices may, for some reader or another, afford a salutary lesson. Being satisfied that my purposes were laudable, and that my views had a rational basis, I determined to cleave stedfastly to my home in Great King-street, and to work incessantly in spite of all difficulties. But alas! while Theory moves buoyantly

on the wing, poor sister Practice toils below on a thorny path. During the reign of the great "panic," and for nearly a year afterwards, creditors, though otherwise good humoured friendly people enough, did not care a rush about securities, far less, about castles in the air. It needed no little address, and all the influence of Sir Walter Scott, to obtain time in his own case; and how then could a poor insignificant supernumerary hope for such indulgence? In short, creditors all would have hard cash, or else they threatened vengeance and *war à l'outrance;* and yet this warfare, on their parts, was quite jocular and friendly. In such proceedings there could be no wrong, because they were according to law;—unluckily, however, this led on the other side to so much loss of time, and loss of money,—so much uproar and confusion,—that even Theory was disturbed and disabled in her flight; and, after vain struggles, tumbled down and slept, like Practice, in a "slough of despond;" in plainer terms, every creditor at that time wished to break up his debtor and stop his movements if he possibly could: a proceeding which has been, often enough, compared to the "killing of the goose with the golden eggs," or the process of the tyrannical little master who, doing what he likes with his own, smashes his valuable watch or toy, with the determination to see what he can make of the contents inside. Hence the breaking up of a debtor has been termed a smash, by which name it used to be familiarly known in our facetious world of London, where such occurrences are looked upon as pleasantries; and where, if the smashee complains, he is

very sure of being heartily laughed at for his eccentricity.

Being naturally of an odd, wayward temper, and having always interposed by word and deed against such proceedings in the case of others thus menaced, I could not by any means admire them in my own. In truth, I thought such goings-on both cruel and stupid, consequently formed the rash determination not to be smashed but stand on the defensive. This was no easy matter, and by degrees it led to an open and declared war, which grew fiercer every day for the next twelvemonths, during which time the achievement of any literary tasks, whether original or translated, was rendered impracticable. If, at the outset, I had taken two steps, first to call a meeting of creditors and lay my plans before them, there is no doubt (for events proved this afterwards) that my propositions would have been carried by a large majority; secondly, had I requested my friends, not two or three in number, but at least ten or twelve, to meet together, and after weighing the premisses, to decide what was best to be done, my humble aims would have found abettors. But I did neither. In lieu thereof, and firstly, I had recourse to those very relations whom, in 1811, I had assisted to raise some thousands. I now applied to them only for as many hundreds, and these not as a gift but to be secured on my remaining assets. As a matter of course, I was refused, the refusal being accompanied with the kind advice, that I should leave my family and home, and retire to the Sanctuary. Secondly, I applied to family connections in order to raise merely as much

as the amount of a considerable loan to one among them, which I had advanced readily in *argent comptant*, and which has never been repaid up to the present hour. As a matter of course, I was again refused; and in great wrath, imagining that I had been treated unjustly and unfeelingly in both quarters, I fell back on my own resources.

Forthwith I raised on personal property at a great and painful sacrifice, nearly one half the amount of all my personal obligations, which was distributed hastily in order to gain a breathing time. For the other *moitié* I strove in vain, not knowing that relations and intimate friends are the last who can be expected to come effectively to the rescue at such times. For this, our sarcastical writers, poets especially, have often dealt them hard words and ugly names; and it is perfectly true, that upon such occasions one's nearest connexions are invariably disposed to represent the case as more disastrous than it really is—in better words, they make it a point to fear the worst, to exaggerate every symptom, and to mistrust every flattering prospect of a rally. It is remarkable too, with what tranquillity of demeanour and tone they pronounce their unfavourable decisions. But in common justice it should be remembered that mere love and tenderness, natural anxiety, and a deep sense of responsibility, totally irrespective of other motives, may excite such fears and forebodings in their kind hearts. As to their demeanour and tone, Rochefcouault's flippant aphorism will not apply, because it is quite possible the seeming tranquillity is assumed from a sense of duty and with effort, in

order to conceal emotions of sympathy and sorrow which it would be indiscreet to betray.

Apropos, I may observe that I had, at this time, two friends, in whom, not without good reasons, I placed unlimited confidence. One of them told Sir Walter Scott, that in my case ruin was very certain, inasmuch as it had already come; the other maintained that the said ruin was the very best thing that could occur, the sooner it arrived the better, and until it had been consummated no improvement need be hoped for. Sir Walter owned himself puzzled by this doctrine, but I believe neither of these opinions influenced his own conduct in the slightest degree.

We have at present one very popular author, Mr. S. Warren, who has, on divers occasions, made the principal interest of his narrative in the serious department hinge upon reverses of pecuniary fortune. His "Ten Thousand a Year" is an example of this, where Mr. Aubrey and his family being superseded in their estate by Mr. Titmouse, are exposed to great trials and sufferings. Whether this kind of interest can be allowed to predominate in an autobiography as well as in a popular romance, I presume not to say, but if so, the main purpose of these memoirs is only now commencing, and it would require three volumes more to render the subject justice. As the reader knows, I was born and brought up as heir to independent property; my habits and principles of action were formed accordingly; from earliest youth those habits inclined to consecutive study, tranquillity, and retirement. I had endeavoured to express and

defend such preferences in divers productions, both poetical and prosaic. But from the year 1826 onwards, entertaining precisely the same habits and inclinations, I had no property rightly so-called; the only "fee simple" that remained to me unincumbered was that of free *will*, which, however, was constantly menaced by outward circumstances, and thereby kept in a perpetual state of antagonism and warfare. I was forced to rely on my wits and works, of which the latter were inevitably disturbed, and the former distracted; and as to the "*tranquil* home," which in Dr. Drake's verses had appeared so humble an object of ambition, I have, during the last twenty-five years striven and toiled for it in vain.

The paragraph which I have just now written is but a comment on a text which occurred very near the commencement of these records, where I indicated that the man who parts with hereditary acres becomes afterwards like a weed thrown on the ocean waves, and if not houseless he is homeless. When misfortune lowers—when the waves of chance and change are adverse, and the poor man is not allowed to steer according to his own will and conscience,—it is natural to seek for advice and co-operation from the best and wisest of his friends. In the world of Edinburgh, there was one individual pre-eminent, and by that pre-eminence insulated—nearly the last in some respects, from whom I could expect sympathy or counsel, and yet the first to whom I applied for it; and this was Sir Walter Scott. From the commencement of that epoch, when he seemed unavoidably carried away by the tide and vortex of his own popu-

larity, when his engagements of all kinds multiplied, when he lived in gothic halls of his own building, dined *en petit comité* with George IV., received a title and kept open house, though he remained in heart and mind unchanged, and though now and then he dined with us, as in days of yore, yet our intercourse had retrograded rather than advanced. But on his part, sincere good will towards the poor wayward supernumerary, remained immutable, and this he very soon proved. Sir Walter was not numbered among those exemplary men of the world whose friendship or good will would evaporate in mere words, and fail to *kythe* in actions.

At that time (towards the end of 1825), in common with all the world, I felt assured that Sir Walter's own position was on a rock of strength;—I believed that let the panic rage as it might, its performances could not interfere with his domestic tranquillity. But the purposes of my application to him were very limited. At first I depicted my predicament in the blackest possible shades, rather going beyond the mark in this respect, but not forgetting to place *en couleur de rose* my schemes for its amelioration; and in seeking his advice I was prepossessed by the notion that he would apply the maxim, "tu ne cede malis," and would, accordingly, approve my plans. In that case, all I desired was the interposition of his opinions and influence against those kind friends who recommended a smash as the best thing that could happen; a remedy which I then thought equally absurd and eccentric, but which, from subsequent experience, I

recognised to be an established and unalterable *formula* of practice on every such occasion.

How changed was the well-known old house in Castle-street then!—It was the same, and yet in aspect how different! For a long series of years this had been the great author's home and principal stronghold—there were kept his books and so-called museum. The cottage at Lasswade, and afterwards the house at Ashestiel, were but summer *shielings*, where the reception of many guests was out of the question. If only his ambition had been prudent, and stopped there! Now, the old favourite library, the scene of so many invocations of the Muse, was dismantled and abandoned. All that remained of its furniture was the cumbrous writing-table, which had been transplaced into a back drawing-room on the first floor, where he wrote and received visitors,—a cheerless gloomy apartment, as I thought, and rendered more so by a cast from the scull of Robert the Bruce, recently exhumed at Dunfermline, which came in lieu of *ci-devant* scutcheons and trophies, and formed the only remarkable object.

But though the house was thus changed (and having neglected many of his former counsels, I had little right to trouble him again), the manners and conduct of its owner were as kind and cordial as in days of yore. During that winter I had divers conversations with him in that gloomy study; for as I came late in the afternoon, and did not stay long, his concluding words usually were, that he would think more about it, and in a day or two we should meet again.

Unluckily, as I then thought, there were but few points on which we could entirely agree, and one of these few was the reality of existing difficulties. According to my notions, he drew an exaggerated picture of the storm that was approaching, and against which, as he averred, every one who had wife and children should seek shelter before it was too late. He did not forget the maxim "tu ne cede malis," but with regard to the "contra audentior ito," he maintained that there were cases in which the duty of a good general was to arrange an orderly and honourable retreat. In plainer terms, he thought my plans very intelligible as to their drift, but rather incoherent and irreconcilable in practice. For example, I determined to retain the possession and management of my own property, cleaving to my present home, and to continue my literary pursuits unmolested. "You will find," said he, "that these are practically incompatible with each other, and even were it not so, the struggle to unite them will be more trouble than the matter is worth. If the storm comes in earnest and no adequate provision is made against it, your first postulate will be disputed, and you will be put to so much inconvenience that the second will become quite hopeless and impracticable. I have thought anxiously on the subject, and such, at all events, is my conviction. Besides, I do not find that you are sufficiently true to your old principle—that poets and men of business are characters dissimilar and irreconcilable. I wish now that you would abide by your own *dictum*—leave these troublesome affairs to mere men of business; place heritable property under

their exclusive control, so that they may adjust all claims on it; stick to your poems and translations; retain your working tools, especially your German books, and such other personal property as is needful for family comfort and well-being.

"Now listen and perpend! You have often told me about your partiality for a country life. Some years ago, you asked my advice about taking the old house at Ashestiel, which I told you was grown crazy. Now Chiefswood is untenanted and is likely to be so.* It is heartily at your service. The coal-cellar, I know, is well-stocked for the winter; the furniture will be enough for the wants of your family; of the wine-cellar I need not boast, for you have your own binns of Hock and Rüdisheimer. After arranging most of my year's end accounts in advance, I have fifty pounds in my desk ready to cover all your expenses of removal. One carrier's load, and your own carriage will, I suppose, do for all. My best advice, after matured reflection, is to retire with your books to Chiefswood, where, possibly, I shall not be the worst of neighbours; and henceforward let us see what we can make of the world together!"

I could not leave out this anecdote, first, because it made an indelible impression on my mind, and secondly, because it serves so amply to illustrate and prove what I have said elsewhere of Sir Walter Scott's benevolence. Avowedly, he aimed at being a man of business and man of the world, yet never adopted our most Christian world's amiable maxim, "Every

* Mr. Lockhart's residence, forming part of the estate of Abbotsford.

man for himself *alone.*" Prudence and wisdom, —his own experience of the wayward supernumerary's conduct, perhaps forbade the kind offer he then made to me; but he flung these overboard, and so thoroughly sincere were his intentions that on the departure of Mr. R. S. Wilson, in whose presence the conversation occurred, he took the unusual trouble of leaving his room, and coming down stairs into the lobby, to add a few parting words. "You have refused my offer wholly and unconditionally," said he, "but to own the truth, I am not quite satisfied with your assigned reasons. Suppose they were ever so good and cogent, a man with wife and children should think less of his own feelings than of their safety and welfare. I am almost sure there is a storm coming; take them out of harm's way; at least, make me one promise, that before dismissing my proposal entirely from your thoughts, you will consult about it with your wife, and take her opinion; let her have a fair and unbiassed vote."

CHAPTER VIII.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LATE LORD CARNARVON.— HIS LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR.

HAVING promised to hurry these memoirs to a close, I have perhaps passed over these last years of my life at Edinburgh somewhat too hastily. Among literary characters by whose notice I was honoured at this period, I remember, with special respect and gratitude, the late Earl of Carnarvon (then Lord Porchester) who passed a few days at the "Modern Athens" on his return from a tour in the Highlands. His lordship happened to arrive towards the end of autumn, when few people had returned to town from their summer quarters. I had fought a stout battle against impending difficulties, could receive friends convivially as usual, and during his sojourn at Edinburgh, we met almost daily.

During my long experience, I cannot recollect any individual, in whatever rank, who was more naturally and sincerely inclined to literary pursuits than Lord Carnarvon. But owing to that very *naïveté* and sincerity, he never took the requisite trouble or precautions to gain influence over the mind of our enlightened public. If, like Lord Byron, he had determined to make hard hits for that purpose, I feel very sure the object would have been accomplished. But not

even my early and enthusiastic friend, Dr. Black, in his deep retirement, studying the annals of Tasso's unhappy life, cared less about the world's opinions and taste than Lord Carnarvon. Every good judge (but how few there are!) admitted that in his poem of "The Moor," he had shown extraordinary power. But very evidently this work was written, not *ad captandum*, but for its own sake, or as a means to record and perpetuate cherished impressions. In other words, the romantic story is but a medium to arrest the workings of his own active mind on its own selected stores, without one shadow of reflection on the question, "what will the critic say." It is a poetical reverie rather than a romance in rhyme. One proof of this is at the beginning of the fourth canto, where, led by some secret association, he starts off abruptly to scenes of his early years in Hampshire. The passage, like many others in this long and admirably spirited work, is very beautiful. But its beauties, of whatever kind, were *caviare* to our multitude. It was much too chivalrous and too poetical for them; and if by any process of *remaniement*, the noble author could have made it more suitable for their comprehension and sympathy, it is very certain that he would have declined taking that trouble. In his habits of life, ostensibly and visibly, Lord Carnarvon never aimed at authorship or literary labours. On the contrary, he was a young nobleman always travelling about in quest of information and amusement, and for the benefit of his health. He delighted in change of scene, even in hardships and perplexing adventures on the road. He despised inconveniences and took pleasure in fatigue from which

ordinary tourists would have recoiled. On similar principles, he would work out political, statistical, and moral questions with invincible patience; he might have been eminent as a statesman, and yet after all was no systematic student. His published works, both in prose and verse, grew upon his hands insensibly. The Muse followed him, and would have him for one of her votaries, *malgré lui*. Accordingly, I never met with any author who seemed to attach so little consequence to his own productions, of which, after a volume was published, he thought no more. But he read willingly and patiently, and took delight in finding out merits in others. Of his extraordinary good nature in this respect, there needed no better proof than the praise he bestowed on some stanzas which I happened to write during his stay at Edinburgh, and I regret, that I have no space to transcribe them in the present work.

The acquaintance thus begun was afterwards continued, and his lordship honoured me at various times with kind letters, two or three of which I shall transcribe here, in evidence of his good will towards the humblest of literary aspirants. Immediately after our arrival at London, in 1827, his lordship came to visit us in Great Marylebone-street, where I had temporary lodgings; passed the evening, and staid till the bright summer's sun rose over the slumbering town. That was our last convivial meeting, for soon afterwards he went on another long excursion to the continent, of which, (in 1836) recollections were published in the shape of two anonymous volumes, entitled "Gallicia and Portugal," dedicated to Lord Egremont.

Both in style and in sentiment, this work appears to me so superior to the productions of other continental tourists, that it is *sui generis*, and a pocket-volume of beautiful extracts might be made in support of this opinion. We met divers times afterwards, when my old habits of life were irretrievably broken; but to his honour be it recorded, that the friendship he had shown towards me in days of comparative prosperity never fluctuated during my changed fortunes. Our last interview was in Grosvenor-square, shortly after as leader in a debate, he had made a long and impressive speech at the House of Lords. I believe great expectations were founded by his friends on that demonstration; but the life of a political partisan was little suited to his lordship's previous habits and predilections. Finally, he settled at Highclere, affording there a marked example of a nobleman supporting by his own character and conduct that rank and dignity which a mere hereditary coronet never can bestow. How deeply his early death was deplored, it would be, on my part, both needless and presumptuous to say.

"Cheltenham, Sept. 4, 1826.

"My dear Sir,—I was really grieved on receiving your letter, two days ago, to find by its date that so great a length of time had elapsed since it was written before it reached me. I find, when it arrived in town, I was engaged with my yeomanry, who were then called out. It was sent from town to the place where my regiment was; there it remained some time, when it was forwarded to me at Highclere; from Highclere

it followed me to Brighton, and has at length found me here. I am anxious to explain this mistake to you, as I should be sorry that you thought I was either negligent or wanting in friendship; especially at a moment when you were suffering under the pressure of affliction. I learn, with real sorrow, that your health has been suffering, and I truly sympathise with you in the losses you have lately sustained. I see, with unfeigned pain, the melancholy state of your feelings, and most heartily do I wish it were in my power to offer you consolation. Accept, however, my sincere wishes that you may find your affairs less involved than you expect, and that a brighter morning may not be far distant.

"I return you many thanks for the hints which you give me on the nature and necessities of dramatic composition, as well as for the very just and useful opinions you express on a subject upon which you have well reflected. I quite agree with you in opinion, that in the present state of the public mind, great difficulty will exist in sufficiently exciting the feelings of the audience, and very little danger of acting too powerfully on their sympathies. Besides this difficulty, any writer for the theatre will have to contend with an impediment I fear insuperable, viz., the total absence of any effective female talent on the stage. I am still, however, paying attention to dramatic subjects.

"I have no doubt you are perfectly right in saying, that the exercise of translation has rather a tendency to excite than to repress the faculty of invention. I think, also, that by coercing the mind

to a certain extent, it gives a habit of accuracy most conducive to energy of composition, which must depend upon correctness of style, as the most accurate and appropriate will always be the most nervous expression. It is no feeble exertion of the intellect to render the exact meaning of the original in language at once harmonious and forcible. I should have had much pleasure in reading the comments which you kindly intended to have made on 'The Moor;' that work was written in haste; there are many verbal inaccuracies, besides faults of a more glaring description, of which I am, and still more of which my publisher is guilty. I regret to lose the benefit of your observations, but am still more sorry for the cause;—still, I trust, you view your affairs in too gloomy a light; the couch of sickness is a poor comforter: at that hour every prospect seems tinged with the same melancholy hue. No;—I trust your 'career' is far from 'being closed, or your plans obliterated.' You will still give ample effect to the researches of the last ten years, and your knowledge of foreign literature be still applied to the increase and embellishment of your own. The thin quarto you are so good as to wish to send to me, if addressed to Grosvenor Square, by one of the packets, would find me. Good bye for the present, my dear sir; whenever you have inclination or leisure to drop me a line, I shall feel real pleasure in hearing that your health is amended, and your prospects improving.

"I have the honour to be,

"Yours, most sincerely,

"PORCHESTER."

"Dawlish, Devonshire, Nov. 9, 1826.

"My dear Sir,—I fear I have been little punctual in answering the last letter you were kind enough to address to me; and in this instance I cannot plead so fair and valid an excuse as in the last, when I did not receive your letter till long after it had been written. I have, however, since I received it, been in perpetual motion till the last week, when I have been confined to my couch, and almost to my bed, by one of my old relapses. Believe me, however, I rejoiced most sincerely to perceive by the general tone of your letters, that you are in improved spirits, and that the appearance of your affairs is assuming a brighter aspect. Allow me to say how much gratified I was by the quarto with which you favoured me; it reached me safely at Cheltenham, and I perused it with great pleasure; part of it I immediately recognised as an old friend, and I read it a second time with increased gratification. I can certainly conceive, that passages may not have been relished by individuals who were conscious of their just application. I have thought much of the opinions you express over the entire republic of letters, and of the possibility of producing effects in literature novel and beyond any that have yet been created. How far any effects very novel and yet very striking can be at present produced, I confess I have had, and have, my doubts; your reasons, however, in support of that opinion, are in themselves novel and strong.

"Have you seen any thing of my young friend, whom you were kind enough to allow me to introduce

to you; and have you found him agreeable on further acquaintance? Before I conclude I must say how gratified I feel by the early communication with which you favour me, of the important undertaking in which you are preparing to engage. A periodical work on foreign literature is, certainly, a great desideratum in this country; and, under the united auspices to which you allude, can hardly fail of success. I am greatly flattered by the desire you have intimated of including myself among the list of contributors;—should you think proper to do so, I shall certainly feel much honoured by finding my name associated with yours, and those of the distinguished persons whom you mention. Should I at any time be possessed of information which you might think worthy of insertion, I should be happy to communicate it in the form of a paper; though the uncertain state of my health, and my continual movement from place to place, will I fear render me in general a nominal rather than a real contributor. My paper is drawing to a close, which warns me to the same. Believe me I am rejoiced to hear that you are improving in health and spirits, and glad to find you are again resorting to your favourite occupation. That those occupations may continue an increasing source of pleasure and reputation to you, and your prospects become brighter and brighter, is the sincere wish of your very sincere friend and humble servant.

"PORCHESTER."

" Dawlish, March 28, 1826.

" My dear Sir,—A fatality seems to govern our correspondence,—this being the second, if not the third time, that I have not received your letters till long after the period of their date; I have only just found it among many others, waiting my return from the north of Devon, and from Exeter, where I have been attending the assizes. These delays are lamentably frequent with me, and are created by my own unsettled locomotive habits, which frequently do not allow me to have my letters forwarded. Before I allude to any other topics, you must permit me to say how truly I have sympathised with you in all your difficulties, and with how much pleasure I learn that you are gradually surmounting them.

" I regret, indeed, that I should have been absent from town whilst you were there; but I trust that some opportunity of renewing the acquaintance which I had the pleasure of forming with you in Scotland, will not fail to present itself at no distant period. I rejoice to hear that you have not abandoned your intention of establishing a quarterly journal of foreign literature, a work which has become a great desideratum in this country; and also that you have undertaken the task of editorship, for which you are so competent. I feel much flattered by the wish you again express that I should contribute any little information I may possess in the shape of a paper to your Journal; a request I shall feel most happy in complying with, should I find myself in possession of sufficient matter, and have the requisite time to draw

up any account which I could flatter myself was really worthy of your acceptance. But my time has lately been little at my own disposal from my continual movements, and from the private business which has forced itself greatly upon me;—my attention has been also distracted by this borough affair, on which a committee of the House has just ceased to sit, and whose decision I learn with regret. I have already sent to Treuttel and Co. for the work you recommend, 'Sempre, sur les Causes de la Decadence d'Espagne,' and will read it with the attention I have no doubt it deserves.

"I have been rather inactive since I saw you, though not entirely so, but have completed the sketch which I communicated to you in Scotland; though whether it will be brought out this year or not I hardly know. I should, however, be obliged to you not to mention it, as it would be, in the first instance, anonymous. You have been far from slumbering. I read with much pleasure the lively account of German manners which you have presented to the public, and trust you will continue to enrich our literature by naturalizing the unexplored beauties of foreign composition, in addition to your own original productions. Trusting that I shall soon have the pleasure of meeting you again, and sincerely hoping that you will every day become more renovated in health and spirits, I have the honour to be, my dear sir,

"Yours, most sincerely,

"PORCHESTER."

"I hope to be in town after Easter. I fear from what you say I shall hardly find you there at that time."

CHAPTER IX.

FURTHER NOTICES OF "THE PANIC."—SIR WALTER SCOTT IN 1826. — LETTER FROM HIM TO THE AUTHOR. — HIS "LIFE OF NAPOLEON." — PECUNIARY TROUBLES. — THE "FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW."—THE AUTHOR'S FIRST VISIT TO LONDON.—RECOLLECTIONS OF DR. MAGINN.

How I am to compress the remainder of my story (from 1825 to 1850) within the allotted two hundred pages I cannot tell, but it must be tried! Sir Walter Scott's kind offers, both as to loan of money and loan of a residence, having been gratefully declined, I spent the winter of 1825-26 in waging war against the "pressure from without," a battle in which, *pro tempore*, I was the winner, but, as already said, at the cost of sacrifices which rather embittered the victory. During the ensuing spring, the panic acquired its full strength and raged with a vengeance. In regard to citizens neither in debt nor in danger, the cry, nevertheless, was "no trust;" in regard to those indebted and embarrassed, the watchwords invariably were "break up," and "smash." Repeatedly during these memoranda, it has been indicated that I never entertained much respect for the world and its opinions. Now the negative proposition, that the world is not deserving of respect, degenerated into the positive affirmation, "it is a madhouse, or

worse than a madhouse, a pandemonium, where not merely the death's-head but the devil is lurking concealed under every visage." These words, no doubt, sound very harsh and very wild, yet are not much to be wondered at, considering in what manner our world's lurking traits of character were developed at this epoch. For example, the break-up and sale by auction of Sir Walter Scott's house and remaining effects in North Castle-street, when Lady Scott was on her death-bed—this was among the various popular demonstrations of the time which I could not excuse. If only *one farthing* per head had been contributed by all who had in various countries been entertained and instructed by his works, that house and its contents might have been bought twenty times over! It may be alleged, no doubt, that Scott would have disdained to accept any such contributions, also that the break-up in Castle-street took place by his own consent. Still, there were ways and means to prevent it; the profits to creditors must have been infinitesimal, and I feel at this moment as I did then, that no representative of *Glossin* and his rabble ought to have been *allowed* to cross that threshold, to profane and pollute the hearth of that great and good man, who had achieved more to extend and perpetuate the honour of Scotland than all her other literary worthies put together. Yet with cold, stolid, iron visages, Modern Athenians witnessed that profanation; with perfect *nonchalance* they took possession of his old-accustomed abode, which he was never more to enter. Henceforward in his walks, he made a *détour* to avoid the sight of

North Castle-street, and I have reason to believe that this event, light as he made of it, and altogether trivial as it might seem to others, assisted to shorten his days.

The panic, as I have said, tended to bring out character. We might have said, "in *panico* veritas." It is undeniable that Scott had not only hosts of admirers, but a very few *sincere* friends, some of whom proffered assistance, which he stedfastly declined. But it is no less true that at Edinburgh and elsewhere, he had rancorous traducers and enemies, who, though extremely contemptible as such, were yet numerous as a body, and, in their own estimation, of no little importance for wit and worth. In the summer of 1826, I had the honour to meet with one of these gentry, a highly respectable man, whose leading maxim in life was to take care of number one, and who advised his friends each to do the like, so that all might be provided for; a punctilious and moral man, moreover, who if a neighbour fell into troubles, invariably found out that it was all his own fault, and that as he had chosen to make his own ill fortune, it would be a sin to help him out of the scrape. After dinner, warming with old wine from the cold profundity of an antediluvian cellar, this worthy favoured us with his private opinions on the cleverness and dishonesty of Sir Walter Scott, who, no doubt, foreseeing Constable's bankruptcy, had disposed of Abbotsford to his eldest son, and so placed it beyond the reach of creditors. Our host grew fidgety, for as I could not suppress an ill-tempered and contemptuous look, he apprehended an immediate quarrel. However, the discussion soon

ended. It appeared to me obvious enough, that to conclude without sufficient premisses was idiotical, and that to vilify any man behind his back, without being able to support the libel by adequate proofs, was both cowardly and dishonest. However, I contented myself with stubborn facts. That Abbotsford was disposed of there could be no doubt; but I submitted that our respectable friend was utterly unprepared to establish either that this took place with foreknowledge of the bankruptcy, or that the Author of "Waverley" would fail in his undertaking to pay off every shilling of the enormous debt which the said bankruptcy had brought against him. Without proving this last, which it was impossible to do, the injurious *dictum* we had just heard must be regarded as a mere aspersion, equally stupid and malevolent. Hereupon our host followed on the same side with such vigour and zeal, that our respectable friend, being in an awkward minority, changed the subject, though not without a growl, indicating that his own views of the matter were immutable.

At London, the foolish panic had been so violent that it soon wore out its own strength and declined; but at Edinburgh, where it arrived later, we hugged it for the ensuing six months pertinaciously. Having said so much on this topic already, I might pass over the year 1826 almost without further comment, were it not for some events which influenced the remainder of my life, for example, the receipt of a letter from Sir Walter Scott, which, most unintentionally on his part, led afterwards to my removal from Edinburgh in the vain hope of obtaining a *tran-*

quil home in London. If at this hour, I ask myself the question what could be the reason of all the disturbance and loss of tranquillity, for my life I cannot tell, except that on the subject of pecuniary matters it was at that time the world's pleasure to be mad. I met Sir Walter Scott soon after the opening of the Court of Session, when he said I should find him at his new quarters, and more busy than ever heretofore. I went and found him domiciled precisely as my early friend, the Rev. Mr. Mullens, used to be in days of yore, namely, in a third-rate lodging, in North St. David's-street, where, under a load of other cares, he was every day progressing with the "Life of Napoleon." It appeared to me too evident that no constitution could remain uninjured by the trials, self-imposed, which he then underwent. He fixed his attention on his employments without the slightest consideration for his own feelings of whatever kind, either in regard to state of health or domestic sorrows. He had undertaken certain tasks, and whether *invitâ Minervâ* or otherwise, these were to be, and *must* be accomplished.

On the 16th May, Lady Scott died at Abbotsford. Ten or twelve days after that melancholy event, he returned to town, took his place as usual in the Court of Session, and resumed his tasks. It seemed to me, that from this date onwards his literary undertakings were comparatively all forced work. He sustained outwardly an aspect of entire tranquillity, but was not in a natural state. Formerly, Sir Walter used to insist that three hours per day of application to literary composition was as much as any brain could

safely bear. Now this kind of caution seemed to have been quite laid aside; he rather argued that fatigue was a needless weakness, and that the best way was not to allow the existence of such a bugbear. I can imagine that during that year 1826, he wrote on an average ten or twelve hours per day, yet was all the while haunted by the conviction that he could not by possibility render justice to the enormous and bewildering mass of materials which crowded on him.

I had refused his kind offer of a tranquil asylum in the country, and having prepared for strife with adverse circumstances, did not grumble about the trouble; my ground of complaint was, that I did not meet with fair play. Cleaving to home, and desiring to work there unmolested, I found myself constantly threatened with the loss both of liberty and property; according to the wise law of the land and fashion of the times, I was again and again proclaimed a rebel, and Sir Walter officially had occasion to sign the warrants for these very proclamations, so that my condition, in that respect, was forced on his attention. I had wife and children to support, and if this *mauvaise plaisanterie* of a continued civil war were kept up at such rate, it was very clear that all means of providing for them would be annihilated. My income was consumed in law-costs, my time occupied in useless negotiations, and valuable property was by degrees frittered away. In the beginning of June, Sir Walter Scott wrote to me as follows. It was a letter intended to be shown as indicating his notions what might be done even by a humble supernumerary, in order to realize some permanent income.

"St. David's Street, Thursday night.

"My dear Sir,—I have been thinking with some anxiety on the subject of our conversation to-day. It is needless to say how much I wish that matters were otherwise. The business is, if possible, to help them as they are. It has often struck me that a quarterly account of foreign literature, mixed with good translations, and spirited views of the progress of knowledge on the Continent might make a regular and reasonable, though not a large income for a man who was disposed to work regularly and to confine himself within limits as to expense. Germany, in particular, affords a fund of information to which each Leipsig fair is adding much that is good, bad, and indifferent. The difficulty would be to find a publisher, as times go, for such a work; but if it could be assisted in the beginning by a handsome subscription, the obstacles would be much diminished. You are eminently qualified, in many respects, for such a task. Whether you could bind yourself to the drudgery of it—for daily and constant drudgery you must look for—you only can judge, and I will make no apology for recommending any honourable labour, however severe, as I am myself a hard-working man.

"It is true that no great result could be expected from such a plan at the commencement, but it might afford support, and might, if steadily followed out, secure independence.

"I have little time to write, but will be happy to explain my ideas more at large, if you will call any day at three o'clock, when I am rarely abroad. I forgot that Lord Gillies is absent from Edinburgh

just now about some family illness, I believe. But I would much rather speak to him when something like a plan was fixed upon than otherwise, since I fear if I had not something to propose, our conversation would be very vague and useless. Observe, my dear sir, all I can promise from such a plan in the beginning would be a very small matter; but industry and exertion might make it a great one. I think, in the meantime, you should abstain from printing or publishing any thing which malignity, however unjustly, might interpret as reflecting on any of your connexions. It can in no circumstance do good, and may do a great deal of harm. Excuse my writing abruptly and to the point, for I was born and bred a man of business, and therefore am in the habit of writing little more than the needful. I am dear sir, "Your most obedient servant,

"WALTER SCOTT."

Truly, one part of my own cherished plans was very practicable. I could cleave to home, that is, to my own house, but to work there without molestation, to follow out any literary employment consecutively and with proper attention, had become quite impossible. The proposition I made to my facetious assailants was twofold, and in well-known words: "have patience, and I will pay you all." To the latter they had no objection, but the former during the continued reign of the panic was quite inadmissible. Rather than have patience, they would forfeit all chance, from any future prospects. "Break up" and "smash" continued to be the favourite

watch-words; *any thing rather than a quiet life;* and during these pleasantries the summer of 1826 grew so intolerably hot, that a phenomenon occurred, which I suppose is unknown even in tropical climates. The earth itself caught fire, or, in plainer terms, the moss and heath of the Grampian Hills ignited, and during the nights of July and August might be seen blazing for miles.

Towards the calm tranquil time of autumn, however, I had nearly arranged with all my tormentors; there came a lull,—a kind of lucid interval,—and during frequent walks in company with the two kind friends already mentioned, there arose the plan of a new Quarterly Journal of Foreign Literature; a plan (*as we devised it*) so new in this country, and so comprehensive, that the fulfilment of it remains a *desideratum* up to the present hour. But instead of bringing ready money, the scheme, as I proposed it, would have required large funds at the outset, such as could only have been hoped for by subscription; an expedient of which, at that time, I never dreamed. However, we agreed to begin according to the old maxim, "cut your coat according to your cloth," and in the month of October I wrote on the subject to Sir Walter Scott, who replied immediately, and in the kindest terms, that it was "a good plot, a strong plot, and full of expectation," giving me also full authority to announce his name as an intending contributor, along with the names of Sir William Hamilton, Mr. J. C. Colquhoun, Mr. George Moir, Mr. de Quincey, and others with whom I had conferred.

To bring out the new journal in Scotland was out

of the question, Blackwood being almost our only remaining publisher, and he had enough to do without this. But it might very well be put together and written at Edinburgh. As to the notion of ever leaving home on account of this employment, I could not have admitted such a thought for one moment. I regarded it only as one amid a multiplicity of literary schemes which, if carried out, might possibly do good in the world, and meanwhile might assist in keeping a roof-tree over my own head. Again and again I had been kindly invited to London, but resolved never to enter within its walls; a wise resolve, like many others, never broken as regards unalterable *will*, but, nevertheless, sadly trampled on *in practice*. At length to my own surprise and chagrin, I was persuaded to go thither for a short visit in February, 1827, travelling to town during a snow-storm and bitter frost, for the winter proved as severe as the previous summer had been sultry.

Of that journey and sojourn, pressed as I now am to wind up these memoirs, I need say little more than that my reception, as it has happened before and since to countless other new comers, was far too favourable. From all quarters I met with kindness, attentions, and hospitality. But as my object in London was only to arrange matters in regard to the forthcoming review, I sought not for any society—I declined invitations, and paid no visits unconnected with my purpose. The lions of the capital might have existed and roared in thousands, but I would not cross the threshold of my hotel to look at one. It may seem very ungracious and ungrateful, but is, nevertheless,

true, that amid all varieties of amusements and all the comforts of life, my great object was to escape from them and return home as soon as possible; nor would I have staid longer than a week, had it not been for the receipt of a letter from Dr. John Gillies, dated Cheltenham, whence he proposed returning very soon. I staid for his arrival, as we had not met for the last eighteen years.

I do not forget the strange alterations of aspect which London presented to me within that short time, the prevalent impression, to own the truth, not being over favourable. How comfortless, miserable, and smutty appeared the streets in the gloom of the first cold morning, as, in company with Captain Wemyss, M.P., I progressed from the city in a hackney-coach to Degex's, in Leicester-street, the honourable gentleman being *en route* for his lodgings near the Haymarket. But how the scene brightened, and London opened another world, when after quarrelling with Degex's, which I left in five minutes, and having made a hasty toilet at Fladong's Hotel, I emerged to enjoy the solace of a matinal cigar before breakfast, in Regent-street. The red frosty sun had then uprisen; the shops were opened with their wealth, *ad captandum*, in the windows; the houses looked bright and new, and at that early hour the broad street had an aspect not of cheerfulness only, but tranquillity. Contrasting that scene with the dull quietude of Edinburgh, which I had quitted only forty-eight hours before, I had impressions, perhaps, somewhat similar to those of a good citizen of Aberdeen, in whose opinion that northern metropolis was

not to be excelled by any in the world. Arriving for the first time in London, he was forthwith conducted by a friend to St. Paul's churchyard, where, after looking up for some time in profound silence at the cathedral, he suddenly exclaimed, as if in soliloquy: "Weel, that *dis* mak a fule o' the kirk o' Fittie!" In plainer terms, there had been a very grand new church built at Foot-dee, near Aberdeen, but St. Paul's *did* beat it hollow.

Of the purposes with which I came to town, I dare not allow room for saying much, and yet somewhat might be adjoined, *non meâ causâ sed aliorum.* Whilst preparing a Quarterly Review, of which the subject matter was to be foreign books, I cherished prospects far more ambitious. I wished to establish by degrees such a *rapport* of intellect betwixt different countries, that whenever a new vein of the universal mine had been opened in one, it might be simultaneously appreciated and followed up in another. I would have a society constituted for the cultivation of foreign literature in all departments, so as to break down the hitherto insurmountable barriers of time and space. But such intercourse could not even be attempted without large outlay for importations, to which my wise publishers demurred, insisting that they had already a greater stock of continental publications than could be read, understood, or sold. Objections were made even to a regular and comprehensive supply of the German *Literatur-zeitungen*, which I held to be indispensable; and my cosmopolite notions were looked upon as utopian and chimerical;—and yet, I have reason to believe, that at Berlin there exists, at this

moment, a society such as I had proposed to form; but in truth, hardly any one cared a straw about the matter, and the number of literary men at London, who then meddled with foreign literature at all, was wofully limited. Up to the present hour my cherished visions remain as they were—visions only. We travel no doubt, and yet, comparatively speaking, we remain ignorant of the literary stores and literary institutions even of Germany and France. Conceited of a few translations, we imagine, as of yore, that enough has been done, and that the mines are worked out.

I have said that my first visit to London may be passed over in few words; and, strange as it may sound, the day which, during a month's absence from home, dwells most on my remembrance, was spent out of town altogether. The bitter frost had continued a long time; but in the beginning of March a thaw wind came with the breath of June; the almond trees started suddenly into blossom, and in a fine morning Dr. Maginn called on me to propose an excursion to the house of our mutual friend, Mr. Lockhart, at Wimbledon. "For a shilling each," said he, "we shall ride to Putney bridge; and then may bid adieu to all traces of the straggling overgrown Babylon. Our walk will be through picturesque park scenery, whence we shall emerge on a wilderness of heath, broom, and whins, such as Robert Burns might have rejoiced in. We Cockneys can easily escape into the country, if only our occupations would allow."

Up to the year 1827, and for some years after-

wards, Dr. Maginn retained all that buoyancy and elasticity of spirit for which, naturally, he was so remarkable, and which it *then* seemed as if no trials or pressure could subdue. So little had his habits, either of daily task-work or conviviality, injured his nerves, that he enjoyed our excursion with all the zest of a school-boy broke loose for a holyday. The only darkening trace left by his intercourse with the world and its ways were betrayed by his disposition to make sarcastic remarks on leading characters of the day, sparing neither Tory nor Whig. Yet his was ever a playful kind of sarcasm, entirely free from any bitter alloy of misanthropy and rancour;—to such feelings, indeed, he was of all men I ever knew the most impassive: insomuch that if his worst enemy had fallen into a state of suffering and distress, on hearing of the circumstances he would have hurried away at his most rapid pace, to find out whether he could render any assistance.

At this distance of time, to attempt recapitulating our conversation during a two miles' walk would be absurd;—wild and desultory it was no doubt, a very perfect example of the style which the French call *abandon*. And yet I remember that some part of our talk turned on subjects which, it might have been supposed, were very much out of his way. The discussion, however, arose naturally enough, because as editor then of a new Quarterly Review, I had received some elaborate papers on metaphysical subjects, by the contents of which I felt puzzled. If deep, they were not clear, either in matter or style; and on this occasion I felt astounded, as many of his friends must at other

times have been, at the extent and variety of his reading, and the accuracy and readiness with which he could bring it to bear on any analogous topic of the moment. Not only mediæval logicians, but fathers of the church, folios of St. Gregory, St. Basil, and St. Thomas of Aquino, which, judging by his usual occupations and disposition, he never could have opened, were even familiar to him. He could cite their decisions on intricate questions, and undertake to point out the identical passages if needful.

In Dr. Maginn's literary character there was one leading trait, which, during the course of a long life, I have always found to be of most rare occurrence, namely, that to great vivacity and quickness of apprehension and feelings, he united patience, perseverance, and amenity of temper. For this virtue of perseverance, indeed, as applicable to any separate and exclusive line of study, his life in London, from its commencement to its untimely close, allowed him no opportunities whatsoever. In Ireland, as I believe, his position had been such, that by continuing his employment there he might have enjoyed a competent income, and yet have had some hours daily at his command for literary undertakings; but London allured him, as it has allured hundreds of others, into its fatal vortex. The well-intentioned, but not so well-judged, advice and invitations of friends, conspired to rivet his destiny. That perfect command which he seemed to exercise over his own faculties, the almost unexampled facility and readiness with which he could write in verse or prose on any given subject, rendered his aid of pre-eminent value in

periodical literature, but especially in productions of the daily and weekly press. The result naturally was, that engagements in this department were proffered to him, nay, crowded on his attention from the first week of his arrival in town. He accepted such as a matter of course, and never afterwards, until disabled by adversity and illness, was allowed to pause in his desultory career,—a career indeed unworthy of his high talents, and uncongenial to the real bent of his mind, which I suspect was, even among his professing friends, but little understood and appreciated.

At our first meeting in Edinburgh, when I earnestly pressed on his attention the plan of sojourning there, he designated himself as a mere "scrap-writer," for which occupation London, as he said, afforded the best field. The term jarred on my ears then, as it does now. Too true it was, that in consequence of his daily engagements to the organs of a party, he had become a scrap-writer, and not having any independent fortune, he never could emancipate himself from the yoke. By talents, by acquirements, by unconquerable patience and equanimity, Maginn was qualified for works of long laborious research, and the nicest critical investigations. Nor was he less capable of romantic and poetical invention. But a family depended on his exertions; the wants of the day and of the week must be supplied. He must write, although *invitâ Minervâ*, on the topics of last night's debate, evanescent and paltry as their interest might be. The longest and most sustained efforts which circum-

stances allowed him to make, were only fugitive chapters for magazines and reviews.

Patience and good humour might and did render this kind of life supportable; the burthen was borne with such apparent ease that byestanders did not suspect its weight; but by no possibility could such broken and desultory application prove sanative, cheering, or in the long run prosperous. His contributions to magazines had, no doubt, a liveliness and *verve*, joined with a command of language which few have equalled. And yet, these essays were for the most part, written so hastily, and under such pressure, that I have heard him avow again and again, with transient bitterness, that he scarcely ever sent such papers to the printer without feeling an almost irrepressible impulse to throw them into the fire. It argued, indeed, but little presumption on the part of Maginn's nearest friends and relatives if they sometimes entertained hopes that, after his long services and stedfast adherence to the Tory party, he should be protected against such pressure. But neither place nor pension, rarely even a well-filled purse to meet an emergency, fell in his way. It is true enough that excuses can easily be made for the wealthy leaders of that party; for his own conduct was such as to leave them in ignorance of his real situation. His constant habit of suppressing all notions of *self*, his cheerfulness and willingness to be occupied with engagements which did bring remuneration, however vacillating and inadequate, were enough to deceive lookers-on, and lead them to believe that he had sufficient resources. During

his *last* days of suffering, Sir Robert Peel, as on some former occasions, stood preeminent in his kindness and liberality to this man of learning and genius, I do not forget that towards the same melancholy epoch the King of Hanover and Lord G. Somerset manifested their sympathy.

But the relief came too late. The same funds which were then applied might, if obtained twelve months earlier, have saved his life.

During long experience, I have scarcely ever met with any one better fitted than he was to live happily and economically in a quiet country home, where in applying his excellent talents to literary tasks not of an ephemeral character, he might have secured both income and fame. But he had no such quiet home; he had no sufficient capital whereon to fall back even *for a single year* until any regular work was completed. I have seldom or never known any one more affectionately attached to his family, yet by the force of external circumstances he was from them too often (though not in heart), disunited and dissevered. Provident he certainly was—for their sakes anxiously and conscientiously provident—having his plans well arranged and working daily at the top of his speed. Notwithstanding the temptations of life in London, of all places that where an author is most easily misled into reckless expenditure, and where he is most mercilessly treated if he falls into arrear,—notwithstanding such temptation, I firmly believe that up to the year 1830, or, I might say, 1833, Dr. Maginn had not contracted any obligations which his literary

income, if continued, would not have enabled him to meet and to fulfil.

Gradually and steadily, despite of obstacles, he had risen in public estimation. His personal friends (among whom he reckoned many of high rank and ample fortune) were numerous, and by them he was *fêted* and flattered, having frequent invitations to assist at their jovial banquets. He had accepted regular employment as editor of the "Standard," a paper which, under his management, throve rapidly. Thus far and no farther he was over sanguine and improvident, namely, in cherishing the belief that he would be allowed to continue his occupations and to work his way up in the world. Already this newspaper afforded him 600*l.* per annum, and by time and perseverance the profits might have been doubled. In his case, however, it must be allowed there were some arrears to be met. A proletarian or professional man in London, especially if he be of a generous disposition, cannot entirely escape such. Their liquidation, of course, depended on his continued industry and uninterrupted discharge of his editorial functions. But a literary man thus placed is, in London, watched with lynx eyes; his steps are dogged wherever he wends his way. No sooner was it known that Maginn held a responsible and profitable situation, than his creditors, with that peculiar sagacity which belongs to the English creditor, aided by so-called English law, endeavoured to dispossess him of it, by rendering him wholly incompetent to its duties. Against circumstances like these, patience and fortitude are evidently no protection. To bear

with adversity and to conquer it, notwithstanding the poetical *dictum* on this matter, are widely different. He was injured and molested, of course, but contrived to rebut these wise proceedings for some time, and retain his usual place, but this could be done only by transactions which our clear-sighted world would call "reckless improvidence," by forestalling his income, and becoming more deeply involved. This mode of defence, this parrying of attacks could not last long. At length there came an *ultra* sagacious claimant, a man of decisive measures, who "would not be trifled with, no, not he!" and by this good creature, Maginn's *regular* course of employment was effectually cut short.

Not a murmur escaped him on that score, *c'était la fortune de guerre.* He was removed from his editorial desk, on which his income then principally depended, and for a time, consequently, debarred from intercourse with his family and friends. To these beneficial and prudent arrangements he submitted cheerfully and as a matter of course; although we read in Lockhart's Memoirs that the mere menace, the *imagined* possibility of such treatment, unhinged, paralyzed, and upset the strong mind of Sir Walter Scott for more than a week! But this first act of molestation and annoyance by no means disunited Maginn from his editorial duties—it only compromised his interests by cutting off his personal and regular attendance, and by increasing the amount of his embarrassments. After some time he resumed possession of the editor's room; but the sagacious example set by one creditor was soon followed by

others. The next interruption was of longer duration, the third still worse, and at last he was forced to remain a year or more in the so-called "Liberty of the Rules," a pitiable resource; which, as being too great an indulgence, has of late been abolished. By repetition these wise proceedings absolutely broke up all his plans, carefully as they had been framed, and zealously as he would have carried them out. It is true enough, that to superficial and ordinary observers, Maginn seemed to meet such annoyances with perfect indifference; he could continue to write under any circumstances and in any place; but the superintendence and care which he had bestowed on the daily paper were, of course, at an end, and regularity of habits in regard to it or any other employment, became more and more hopeless and impossible.

From all this the question might naturally arise, had Dr. Maginn no real friends, or was he like the "hare with many friends?" I should be a very unfair and indiscreet annalist, either as regards justice to his own memory or the reputation of others, if I allowed this question to remain unanswered. On one occasion a plan was suggested and organised by an intimate and sincere friend in order to buy off all his embarrassments, and it was munificently supported by Sir Robert Peel and others. But unluckily this kind adviser was not much experienced, if at all, in the beautiful workings of our so-called legal system. It had not been sufficiently taken into consideration, that the worshipful class of gentlemen attorneys in London (four or five thousand in number!) derived

great part of their income from costs; and that in almost every instance of Dr. Maginn's engagements, the original amount was thereby doubled. Friends were not wanting nor slow to manifest their good will or liberality, but the original claims, and the rapacity of attorneys, *together* proved too much. The aggregate had not been duly reckoned, and enough was left unadjusted to embitter the remainder of his days. *Me ipso teste*, during the last seven years of his life, Dr. Maginn had constant pecuniary troubles; but like his *ci-devant* friend and ally, Theodore Hook, he would allow no one, except his men of business or some very special confidant, to know or suspect this. In society he might have appeared the same as ever, only that his engagements being painfully multiplied, and his application more than ever broken and desultory, his manner also became more abrupt, his habits more irregular, and his nervous system too evidently shaken. In the year 1827, during our walk to Wimbledon, how little did I expect that the next eight or ten years would work such unfavourable changes! At that time he did treat the world sarcastically, it is true; and this mood came first into play when we talked of the probable reception and support of the new quarterly work which I then projected.

I might record our conversation that afternoon, and might in other ways extend this chapter, for all is fresh in my remembrance. I can yet recall impressions of the seeming quietness and solitude of Mr. Lockhart's residence, can still hear the cawing of the rooks in the old trees at Wimbledon, and re-

collect how depressed I felt in spirits, as I returned from thence next day towards the murky haunts of London. There are other literary friends whom I met daily at this time, whom I would wish to commemorate, but I am limited to three volumes, and for the present must make my escape from the great Babel.

CHAPTER X.

RETURN TO EDINBURGH.—THE TRUST-DEED.—RES ANGUSTÆ DOMI.—REMOVAL TO LONDON.—A HOME THERE DIFFICULT TO FIND.—THE "FOREIGN QUARTERLY REVIEW."—EDINBURGH REVISITED. MRS. DEMPSTER.—SOMEWHAT OF THE MARVELLOUS.—LOSS OF MSS.—ABBOTSFORD.

VERY ungrateful no doubt it was, and very stupid on my part—but to own the truth I did heartily rejoice at leaving London. I rejoiced at it the more in proportion to the attractions which London afforded and the kind attentions I met with, for if these had been ten-fold greater, I should only have been more disposed to echo the words of the old song: "there is no place like home." It was, therefore, a glad and cheerful hour for me when, having paid my bill at Fladong's, I proceeded *en voiture* to the old "Bull and Mouth" to take my place in the North Mail. After arriving at Edinburgh, I gave favourable accounts of the great Babel, as in duty bound, for having gone thither poor, I came back comparatively rich, with no less than 300*l.* in pocket. But not for one instant did I entertain the notion of leaving the home to which I had thus returned. And in the determination to abide by Edinburgh, I was resolutely seconded by my unalterable friend, Sir Walter Scott, who saw clearly into the affairs and situation of

others, whilst he so fatally overtasked himself in the conduct of his own. "You still have a chance for a tranquil life *here*," said he; "indeed might have been sure of it, had you not, like a wilful man, chosen a thorny path, and encountered difficulties that might honourably have been evaded. Besides, if the worst come to the worst, you have always a royal park, extensive enough, and picturesque at all events, for your place of retirement. But in London, if means proved inadequate, and debts were incurred, there would be no other resource but the King's Bench. You have professional and hereditary right to a *pied à terre* in your own country, but there you would be like an alien."

Accordingly, never did any wise captain of a vessel strive more anxiously in order to keep his proper course against adverse winds and waves than I did after another fashion, more like that of the poor limpet cleaving to the rock, in order to keep my place at home. As to the new journal, so numerous were my literary schemes at that time, that I rather treated it *de haut en bas*. I would not, and could not, see any difficulty in making up the contents of a quarterly pamphlet of three hundred or four hundred pages, which, with the co-operation already secured, could, with great ease, be arranged at Edinburgh within six weeks. As a collaborator and adviser, my friend, Mr. George Moir, was in himself a host. He had command of divers languages, his critical taste was acute, his patience was unconquerable, and he shied at no difficulty.

As already often indicated, my own leading object in the cultivation of foreign literature, was to demonstrate the existence of treasures hitherto unknown and unexpected, to bring out of the dark mine gems and ore—the very existence of which had been denied. I resolved, therefore, that, in my editorial article for the first number, I should enter on entirely new ground, namely—by giving a *resumé* of the modern literature of Sweden. In regard to this topic, I had been scorned and flouted at both in Edinburgh and London, not by literary friends, of course, but by other advisers, who, without taking the trouble to read or write much, were yet thoroughly convinced that Sweden had no other authors to boast of but Linnæus and Swedenborg. Rather pugnaciously retorting against this, I was instantly put down and floored by the questions; "What, are you really credulous enough to believe that if there had been any men of genius, any books worth reading in that cold miserable country, we should not have heard about them long ere this time? It is true enough, we have not much literary intercourse with Germany, but did we fail to hear of Goethe and Schiller, and Wieland and Klopstock? Depend upon it, sir, the hypothesis about modern literature in Sweden is mere *haivers* and will end in smoke!"

The article which I produced on this neglected subject was hastily drawn up; but I had the pleasure of seeing it mentioned, with great praise, and republished entire in more than one of the German and French contemporary journals.

"Any thing rather than a quiet life!" This I

have said, was a watch-word—a general cry during the panic. But although, in 1827, the panic had subsided, and though quiet was more than ever needful for my employments, I regret to say that soon after my return to Edinburgh, the pleasantries of the former war were, in my case, renewed, and the arrangements I had laboured to cement, in 1826, were sadly disordered. Shrewd suspicions were entertained, indeed were avowed, that having gone to London and formed new connexions, I had become suddenly rich; and, consequently, the delay which I had before required was no longer needed. It is an error to suppose that such proceedings become less irritating upon longer experience. On the contrary, the faculty of patience may be tried till the spring snaps, and then anger usurps its place. By degrees, I found myself goaded and tormented into the irrevocable execution of a trust-deed, by which eventually I became *dépourvu de tout.* But I murmured not at its execution; for, having no intention of leaving Edinburgh, and the trustees being my friends, I believed that we might move on rationally and harmoniously together.

These details, private and personal as they may seem, are not written in the spirit of egotism, but *causâ aliorum*, in the hope that for some readers a salutary lesson in regard to the ways of our excellent world, may thence be extracted. Having thus given up my whole remaining property, both real and personal, I appointed a meeting at my own house of all who could have any interest in the trust arrangements. It was duly attended. I then stated my

plans, and submitted my proposition which had been carefully weighed and committed to writing. My object was payment in full to the last penny; I would have no compromise, and the only indulgence requested was, that I might have a fair trial how much might be achieved by unremitting industry, which, if successful, would place the claimants in a better position, and if not, they could not lose, seeing that the property I had vested in trustees, would not melt away. My proposition was instantly seconded and cordially agreed to by the meeting without one dissentient voice—a sufficient proof, as I think, that it was not unreasonable in itself, and that the majority of my Edinburgh creditors were kindly disposed.

Most firmly do I believe that the plans I had then formed were well-founded, and that, if allowed to proceed after my own manner, I should have amply realized them. But as might have been expected, the malcontents, the "break-up" and "smash" party, though summoned, did not attend the meeting, they would have nothing to do with it, and on hearing of its favourable decision, were of opinion that they ought to gain a preference by rendering themselves more troublesome than ever. As the genial weather succeeded to a long, severe winter, they became indefatigable in their exertions, and when I went with draft after draft for small sums to my banker, the late Mr. R. Allan, he earnestly suggested that having given up my entire property, it was my bounden duty to avoid a continuance of this warfare, and devote attention exclusively to my proper employments, for which London was a better field than Edinburgh,

especially as I might live there unmolested. Other wise people expressed the same opinion, and it was at last adopted by my own family circle, who began to wish earnestly for a change; however, I remained obdurate; my mind never vacillated for a moment. During six weeks I withstood perpetual innuendos against my wilfulness and neglect of golden opportunities. My correspondents in London also wrote that my presence in town for the due conduct of the first number would be desirable.

The end of all this was that I lost patience, declared that I would no longer be tortured with advice, and that action was far preferable to painful thoughts. Accordingly, towards the end of May, I determined that we should migrate on the spur of the moment, leaving servants, house, and library, as they were; no leave-takings, or preparations whatsoever. But on the evening intended for our departure, the vessel being to sail early next morning, my wife became so thoroughly aware of my deep dislike to the movement that she implored me to abandon the purpose, and agreed that it should never be mentioned any more. At that moment an intimate friend, the late Mr. Benjamin Bell, happened to look in for an evening visit, as was his wont. He entreated me to keep quiet for that night, and allow him, when tired, to rest on the sofa, so that he might be with us to the last, and ready to accompany us at six A.M., to the steam-boat. As I had expected, within that short interval all my own repugnance to the change occurred in full force. Wearied and irritated, I could have left home late at night without reflec-

tion; but the quiet of the next morning brought back all wonted associations, and I felt deeply depressed. However, the die was cast. After two or three hours of broken rest, we drove down to Newhaven, embarking according to the clever old fashion in a fishing-boat, which made its way to the ship lying far out in the harbour. The weather was bright and cheering. Sorrowful thoughts were overpowered by the ridiculous scene on board, where, the berths being inadequate and the cabins overcrowded, all order and discrimination became out of the question. In sooth, there was a mob of real or *soi-disant* members of the *beau monde;* for, excepting ourselves, and the late Mr. Syme, the portrait-painter, I think all the passengers were on their way to London in quest of its pleasures, with the view, not to acquire but to spend money. The gale was brisk and favourable, the captain boldly spread out his canvas, and our vessel soon reached her destination.

Having left Edinburgh so suddenly, and in such ill humour, I had formed no plans for life in London, and as we arrived at the very height of the crowded season, to obtain a furnished house on moderate terms was impracticable. We drove to my old quarters at Fladong's, where, the hotel being crowded, the landlord proposed to me a separate lodging in Great Mary-le-bone street, whither, he would every day, send the needful provisions. Accordingly we took refuge there. It was an old and gloomy house, with furniture which had been perhaps in good condition about the year 1770, and up to this hour, I think, it must originally have been the abode of a miser. No

sooner had I arrived than I set myself to work at my writing-table to amend manuscript articles, and correct proof sheets. The productions of London contributors, with few exceptions, turned out woefully bad. In one instance I wrote the treatise entirely over again, seeing that the proofs could not possibly contain the needful emendations. But by no possibility could I imagine myself at home; on the contrary, the house, to my feelings, was like a prison, or rather it was a bedeviled house. At that time I was accustomed to work much after dinner; but the bright summer evenings existed for me no more; they shone, no doubt, as of yore, but their light was left far away, at Edinburgh. I could no longer look up from my paper when tired, and see the beautiful glow of sunset over the Highland hills. Moreover, the weather turned all of a sudden cold and stormy, with clouds of black dust. We all agreed that London was an odious, gloomy, miserly, repulsive place. My old habits and trains of thought were sadly broken, and yet I clove to them with *will* immutable.

Even in spite of such obstacles, also of endless gabblings, disputes, and quarrels betwixt contributors and publishers, which I could not quash, my literary employments were always a pleasure. I firmly believed that an author's troubles in his proper vocation ought to be considered a source of enjoyment, and as not one of my London acquaintances seemed to concur in this view of the matter, I foolishly imagined that in this respect I held a vantage ground which might eventually be turned to good account. My besetting troubles were of a

different kind; first, the disputes to which I have just now alluded; secondly, pecuniary embarrassments and anxieties; lastly, as it would never do to remain in Great Mary-le-bone street, which was far too expensive, there came of necessity that most odious, time-wasting and detestable of occupations, namely, house-hunting, than which I know nothing that reminds a man more painfully and vexatiously that he is homeless. I tossed about from one place to another, migrating first into a small, inconvenient, yet costly house in Orchard-street, where a month's trial sufficed, thence to Upper Seymour-street West, where we remained nearly twelve months.

For aught that the reader need care, I might pass over the events of that year within a single page. It wore away in sedulous efforts on my part for one solitary purpose, namely, to lead a life outwardly quiet, but inwardly active. Gleams of cheerfulness returned; for being near the Park I could see green trees from my study window, and at times imagine myself settled, and that I had found another home. Too truly, such gleams, however frequent, were transitory. Perhaps there never had existed any being on earth worse trained than I was for contending with adversity; and yet, for the due comprehension of these memoirs be it observed once for all, that I was now thrown upon the world without money at my banker's, without one remnant of property, and established in London on no better basis than as editor of a Quarterly Review, in which undertaking I might or might not succeed, precisely according to the degree of time and attention which I was allowed to bestow upon it.

The success of this publication, at the outset, was much greater than I could possibly have anticipated. A pamphlet of some pages would be required in order to reprint all the laudatory criticisms which appeared in contemporary journals, both foreign and domestic. But this very success roused a war of competition and conflicting interests,—another "tempest in a teapot," amidst which the literary character of the undertaking had well nigh been forgotten and wrecked altogether. Most truly had Dr. Maginn told me, on our way to Wimbledon, that there was no *esprit de corps* among London authors *as such*, and that the only spring of action existing among them, was that of individual gain. By him I had been introduced to Mr. William Fraser, afterwards barrister-at-law, as a young aspirant who had devised a work of the same kind, before my plans were cemented. My cosmopolite views being quite opposed to exclusiveness, cliquism, and mystery, I was quite willing to accept of Mr. Fraser's proffered co-operation, and wished that he should be remunerated for whatever trouble he took, even if it should prove unsuccessful. With this intent I afterwards tried to move the publishers in his favour, but without success, as they had been exasperated by his giving articles to the printer, which, upon examination, were found inadmissible. He soon quarrelled with their English manager, in whom I then placed confidence, because he had several years before brought to me letters of introduction from Sir Egerton Brydges. Of this gentleman Mr. Fraser entertained the worst possible opinion, assuring me that he made himself busy, and

intermeddled solely and exclusively for his own benefit; that no doubt he wished to see the journal established with *éclat*—and having possessed himself of my views and resources as to contributorship, he would then endeavour to carry it on for his own advantage, irrespective of any editor. As to this, whether it were correct or not, I remained quite careless.

I felt confident that, if my own plans were adhered to, or even held in view as an *ideal*, the work would succeed, and that however well established, if my support were *wholly* withdrawn, it would decline. But I did all in my power to quash the disputes, in vain; and the result was that Mr. Fraser persuaded a rival house to establish a rival review, by which, according to his belief and intention, its precursor would be annihilated wholly. As a matter of course, this led to a paper war betwixt the two houses; also, to long letters, (of which I found a sheaf the other day), addressed to myself, and which I answered very briefly. So there were two Foreign Reviews in a country where it had been supposed hardly possible to support one; but instead of hinging on any literary zeal, or *afflatus* of the *divinæ particula auræ*, this mighty commotion originated in a disputed claim for thirty pounds, which I voted should be paid, at once, as being unworthy of consideration; but as the funds could not flow from my own empty coffers, my suggestion was disregarded. Being thoroughly acquitted, both by my friend Dr. Maginn and by Mr. Fraser, of all blame, or voluntary participation in these disputes, I soon dismissed that annoyance from my mind. But our affairs at Edinburgh having been left deplorably

at sixes and sevens, it became indispensably requisite that I should return thither—a step by no means congenial to one, who so much desired quiet, seclusion, and uninterrupted employment as I did. However, I determined that my absence should be very short. This was my first painful interruption after going to reside in Seymour-street; for the war above-mentioned about the review did not set in till towards the winter.

I believe firmly that there are characters in this world, by nature isolated and *separé;* there are *sonderlings* in short, as the Germans call them, who have sources of pain and pleasure with which others can have no sympathy. For myself, among divers peculiar sources of pain, no one has been more trying at times than the necessity of revisiting a deserted home, a scene in which happy hours have been spent, which will return no more. Supposing the last man walking in a church-yard, with the skulls of all his departed friends around him, he could scarcely feel more sad than I did for the moment on entering the well-known apartments in Great King-street, which remained as I left them four months ago, and where I now appeared like my own executioner, compelled to make a break up at least, if not a smash, for the house was to be let to Lord Torphichen, and must be arranged accordingly. If it had not been for the kind assistance of my worthy old friend the late Mr. David Abercromby, writer in Elder-street, I am sure I could not have gone through this task. My books, which had been valued and assigned to my trustees, were rapidly packed up

in boxes, making an enormous load. Others, not included in the valuation, copies of my own works, especially the poem of "Oswald," (now utterly lost), presentation books, an enormous bulk of manuscript papers and letters, and remnants of property left by my late mother, were all deposited hastily in a dark room, of which I was allowed the key, and which was sealed up, on the understanding with my trustees that the door was never to be opened or the contents meddled with, except in my own presence.* With the help of my then faithful old butler, Alexander Stewart, and two clever workmen, this heavy task was got through in less than two days. On the first of these, a circumstance occurred which may seem too trifling to mention, but I do not exactly regard it as such. Among notable characters at Edinburgh was a poor blind woman, who possessed the faculty of playing Scotch tunes on the violin, in a style so exquisite that Yaniewicz, who succeeded Stabilini as our best violinist, declared emphatically that he would give five hundred pounds to be able to do the like. And he was in the right, for he could professionally have turned such a power to better account than poor Mrs. Dempster, who, being in poverty, continued to be so, and gained her livelihood as an itinerant, though there were certain

* This apartment was afterwards broken open by legal functionaries without one word of intimation to me, and the private property all thrown into the hands of an auctioneer. I may forgive, but *cannot* forget that act. The pecuniary worth must have been infinitesimal; but on account of the books and MSS. and for divers other reasons, I regret the loss.

houses at which, instead of a penny, at the lowest half-a-crown was always ready for her encouragement, and among these happened to be mine. Her usual hour of coming was between six and seven in the evening, and as my worthy old friend shared with me a hasty dinner (after many merry meetings this was to be our last) Mrs. Dempster took her accustomed place at the window, and commenced, as in days of yore, "Auld Robin Gray," which she followed up by "Loudon's Bonny Banks and Braes."

"Stewart," said I, "this is very odd! Has Mrs. Dempster been in the habit of coming since I went to London?"

"No, indeed, Sir, we have never once seen her or heard of her for these four months!"

I went to the door, and in rather unsteady accents inquired whether she did not know that I had been absent, and what could have induced her to come this day to a house that had been so long deserted?

"I knew too well," said she, "that you were gone, and gone against your will, to a vile, wicked place. But something told me that you would come again this day. Indeed I heard your voice in the night."

I need offer no comments upon this, though I firmly believe that the poor old musician did receive the warning, and did hear the voice, a belief which I could support on irrefragable and scientific grounds, if this were a fitting place for any such discussion. Respecting her allusion to London, there was no mystery, for I had told her that I was going thither, and she had expressed her dislike of the great Babel, having practised her art there for many a day; but

of my sudden return to Edinburgh no intimation had been sent to my servants, or to any correspondent whomsoever.

I arrived there on a Monday evening; Tuesday and Wednesday were devoted to packing, and on Thursday morning I shared a post-chaise with Sir William Hamilton, he being *en route* for his brother's house, who then resided at Chiefswood, and my object being to have a short interview with Sir Walter Scott. I dare not pause here to write about Abbotsford, much as I might feel disposed to do so. I remember, as of yesterday, the serenity and deep stillness of that autumnal day when I parted with my voiture on the public road, not choosing to drive up to the door. How beautiful and how peaceful was the scene! At the moment one might have thought that the baronial mansion had been deserted, or that it was veritably the Castle of Indolence described by Thomson, where all the inhabitants had for the present disappeared, each occupied with his own lonely day-dreams. But another fancy flitted over my mind; I thought that a kind of religious silence ruled over and pervaded the place, as if no other sounds but organ tones and melodious voices ought ever to break the stillness there, and as if all worldly cares ought to be banished from thence for ever!

I suppose it is not a peculiar or isolated fancy that every strong emotion has a complicated basis, part of which always consists in recollection of experiences remote and far away. I thought then of the scenes of early youth, when I beheld every day a river more

beautiful and powerful than the Tweed happens to be at Abbotsford, and watched the autumnal influences among my own woods. I thought also of the very kind offer made to me by Sir Walter, of a home at Chiefswood, which had never since been occupied by Mr. Lockhart, but was now rented by Captain Hamilton. Too surely my family might now be considered in danger of the fate which he predicted for them when that offer was declined. I reflected also on the many changes that had occurred, the multifarious labours and unprecedented achievements of the great author since, in 1812, I saw in Castle-street the first sketch for his improvements at Abbotsford, namely, the ground-plan and elevation which some artist had given him for "converting rapidly an old farm-house into a tolerably commodious summer-shieling." At this hour I remember well that plan. Its principle was a good one in the true Circassian style, without any pretensions to grandeur, the commodiousness depending on convenient extension, with a running verandah or shaded way along the front, a good expedient for picturesque effect, and which tempers without impeding the sun-light. Psychologists have asserted that a deep dream, lasting only one minute, may comprise events and feelings which it would take an hour to record. The thoughts above-mentioned, and many more, flitted across my mind, during the brief interval of solitude before I entered the outer-hall or armoury, where I found the late Sir William Allan occupied in making a new sketch of some well-known and favourite objects.

As a production in its own way of Sir Walter

Scott's genius, I think Abbotsford has been much less noticed than it deserves. He has even been blamed for not restricting himself to a cottage-home, by those who would profess to reconcile the daring flights of original talent with the prudence or timidity of one who always "looks to the main chance," and invests his gains in the Three per Cents. to "provide against a rainy day." But who can tell what secret springs are conducive to, nay, almost necessary for the movements of genius? The pleasure-grounds, the museum, the armoury, the library, the towers of Abbotsford, and the admirable arrangements in the interior of the mansion were all "means to an end," and integral parts of a great original whole. As literary works progressed, so did those works and collections, which to the ignorant and uninitiated might seem idle and unnecessary, whilst, on the contrary, each mutually upheld and assisted the other. For example, every object in the outer hall or armoury had its meaning, its chain of historic or legendary lore therewith connected, though for common eyes the object in question might be no better than a block of mouldering stone or piece of old timber. So it was with every article in the museum and almost every book in the library. As to the value of landscape scenery, of woods, fields, hills, and rivers to a poetical mind, I need say the less, having so often dilated on that subject already. Respecting the interior arrangements, the machinery I might call it, of the house, all was contrived not merely for symmetrical display, but for home-comfort, in order that time and trouble might

be saved, and that thereby the most might be made of daily life. No college or convent was ever so well arranged as Abbotsford in these respects, and this purpose was carried out even into the most minute details.

My intention had been to confer briefly with Sir Walter Scott, then walk to Chiefswood to dinner, and find my way back to Edinburgh as soon as possible, from Melrose; but this plan was kindly overruled by Mr. Lockhart. Before dinner, I had time for another lonely walk, in the course of which I met Sir Walter, attended by his faithful dogs. Under his own roof, perhaps no one suspected, or would allow themselves to suspect, how much the wear and tear of the last fifteen months had told on his constitution. I was myself buoyed up by the belief that the odious "History of Napoleon" being months ago dismissed from his mind, he would gradually recover wonted health and spirits, gliding back into his proper track of literary composition, and not taking up any tasks that were not flexible under his hands, and in which the objective matter was not familiar to him. With this view I wished to submit to his notice two or three recent publications, affording an opportunity for an article on German chivalry, which I fancied could be made interesting at a comparatively small cost of trouble or thought, and this notion he seemed to entertain very favourably, but said he would think of it, and be prepared with a better answer for me in the morning.

The halls at Abbotsford were no longer crowded, as formerly at that season, with the idle and the gay.

The party at dinner that day numbered only the late Mr. Scott, of Harden (Lord Polwarth), Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, Miss Anne and Mr. Charles Scott, Mr. John Richardson, and Sir William Allan.

I left Abbotsford before eight next morning with Mr. and Mrs. Lockhart, (*en route* for Lanark); from whom I parted at Inverleithen (better known as "St. Ronan's Well"), where I staid for two or three hours, meeting, by accident, some of the best and dearest of my former friends, from whose circles I was now dissevered. Thence, in the evening, back to Edinburgh, to that well-known abode which was no longer my home. On the following morning, by seven o'clock, accompanied by my friend, Dr. James Fraser, I was again on board a steam-boat bound for London, whither I returned, after an absence of only eight or nine days.

CHAPTER XI.

ERA OF SHADOWISM.—AUTUMN IN LONDON.—LITERARY INCOME.—RECOLLECTIONS OF THOMAS CAMPBELL.

WITH this date (September, 1827) in the estimation of most people my autobiography might conclude, seeing that according to Lord Byron's words, and in the estimation of intelligent people, my pretensions to life were ended.

> "He should have died. *Why, what is life*
> *Without a living?*—He hath not a stiver."—*Werner.*

My proper home was deserted and broken up; I had lost utterly what the world in its wisdom is pleased to term substance, and, consequently, was henceforth only a Shadow—a sort of being which the said world naturally abhors. In such cases, however, it is awkward enough that the abhorred Shadow becomes obstinately possessed by the notion that it ought for some time to live, nay, that the so-called substance which the world approved before, comprising sacks of gold, houses and lands, diamonds and rubies, and such like, was but a mere assemblage of adventitious accidents, which, no doubt, it might be convenient to replace if possible. Deluded and confused by this metaphysical nonsense, which no sensible man could endure for a moment, the wretched Shadow, or *soi-disant* substance, who really belongs to

the other world, goes on, not rejoicing it is true, but struggling, constantly occupied with endeavours to put together again his *membra disjecta*, and repossess himself of the lost accidents, a most ghostly pursuit, and almost as irreconcilable to the usages of good society, as the conduct of that abominable class of goblins, who, in days of yore, used to come with borrowed bodies from the grave, and frighten people out of their propriety. Now such deluded or deluding wretches, being, of course, in a state of utter disunion from the world, to which they have ceased to belong, are by irrefragable *sequitur* quite isolated, and the personal reminiscences of any such being must naturally consist of pure (or impure) and unmitigated egotism. He is occupied exclusively with his own incessant struggles, and has no room in his perturbed brain for aught else. No matter! I am pledged to bring this narrative to a close, and now, in the words of Blücher, and of the "Wandering Jew," "onwards—onwards!"

Autumn had come again. That was my first autumn in England, and in the tranquil days of October, though the air seemed to me heavy and poisoned with smoke, I was not without intervals of sunshine and day-dreams. The Shadow, strange to say, was well received in London, but this was simply because the world, not being always pre-eminent for acuteness, mistook him at first for substance. London made quite a fuss about the "Shadow." He had been the means of establishing a new literary work, which he himself disdain-

fully called a Quarterly Pamphlet, and this thing having been well received, made such a sensation, that, as already mentioned, it gave rise to a paper war, and, by degrees, five rival journals came out in opposition to the original production, which survived them all; and at last, after the lapse of years, when it fell into the state of "Peter Schlemihl," and had lost its shadow, it expired also, or dragged on a kind of nursling life, in second childhood.

For this review the publishers were bound by contract to pay to me about 600*l.* per annum, but out of this I had to provide payments to authors, and I never published a single article, with the sole exception of the first, by Sir Walter Scott, for which the writer was not remunerated. But by a special clause in the contract, the publishers and authors were mutually bound to renew it year after year, so long as the work was continued (a clause suggested by Sir Walter Scott), so that I had it in my power, either by writing the whole myself, or obtaining gratuitous co-operation from my friends, to pocket 500*l.* per annum. I reckoned, however, that without such aid, I might gain by it at least 200*l.* yearly, also that it might rise in value, and that by other works I might easily earn 800*l.* more. This was no arrogant presumption on my own part, I was advised in the belief, and in those days, when railroads and cheap publications were unknown, such an income for a working author was reckoned a very small and moderate estimate.

Up to this hour, I believe firmly, that these prospects might have been realized, as I was thoroughly

willing, and not unable to work, had it not been, that circumstances, partly the result of my own rashness, partly of bad advice and deception, and partly inevitable, led me by degrees into a warfare far fiercer and more constant than that of which I had complained at Edinburgh, in 1826. But during the first two or three years in London, I received compliments and encouragement from all quarters, and if ready money failed, I had, at all events, ample credit. For what reason London tradesmen imagined that I was rich, I pretend not to guess; but, at first, they offered exuberant supplies and unlimited trust; but I soon broke the delusion by my avowed unwillingness to go beyond certain bounds. Literary aspirants thought themselves fortunate to obtain introductions to the Shadow, and so frequent were the invitations received to convivial parties, that had I accepted them all, I should scarcely ever have dined at home; but saving a few instances, I did not accept them. On the contrary, I most sincerely preferred hard work in my own study, if only it could have been carried on in peace: but gradually this became impossible. In King James's phrase, I might, indeed, "*blenk* upon paper;" but I could not, by any chance, fix my undivided attention upon it. The faculties which should have been concentrated on literary occupation, were all wasted, dispersed, and driven astray.

To record the author's impressions of the world as he saw it around him—of a world which is past away —and to conserve his reminiscences of remarkable or eccentric characters, formed, at the outset, the leading purpose of these volumes; and, recovering my lost

track, I shall once more snap the chain of mere egotism.

In Seymour-street I had for my nearest neighbour, in a house right opposite, Mr. Thomas Campbell, whom, after many years of previous acquaintance in one sense of the word, I never saw, till we met accidentally in Mr. Colburn's house in New Burlington-street. In those days, the number of living authors was comparatively so small, that even the poorest supernumeraries were known among the higher grades, just as Yalden and Tickell, and Fenton and Broome, had their niches among the worthies of Queen Anne's reign, when authors really deserving of eminence were still more rare than they were in 1827. Truly, if a Thomas Campbell arose in our present era, and tried to make his way uphill as a Glasgow student, with his "Pleasures of Hope," or "Gertrude of Wyoming," it is very doubtful whether our own age would allow him any encouragement. But thirty-five years ago, the phasis of literary affairs was excessively different.

We walked home that day from the bookseller's to our respective houses, recalling by the way *auld warld* stories of Edinburgh;—of days when he resided in Rose-street; — of suppers at which *white meal puddins* were a delicacy, and Ferintosh Toddy was the liquor of inspiration; — of Dr. Anderson, and his grandiloquent discourse;—of Professor and Mrs. Dugald Stewart—of Walter Scott—of James, John, and Alexander Ballantyne, the first with his thorough goodness of heart and unrelenting pomposity, the second with his *de'il-ma-care* spirit in a frame which at best would scarcely hold together, the

third, with an instrument like a penny whistle, whose music, in the opinion of Miss Stephens, now Countess of Essex, was unequalled in the world ;—of good Miss Peacock, afterwards Mrs. James Gray, and many more that I now forget. That evening he was in his best of humours, with a smiling and animated countenance, walking at a brisk pace, and occasionally flinging his arms about, *more suo*, as if bidding defiance to the outward world, or warning it not to interfere with his occupations. But such moods were hardly desirable, as in his case they were always followed by fits of the deepest gloom. *(Nullus erat sic impar sibi).*

Surely, no English poet ever founded his extensive reputation on less extent of paper and print than Thomas Campbell, unless we cite Thomas Gray. The *vivida vis* of literary life in each instance seemed to have been concentrated within a few bright hours, the lustre of which was so powerful that it remains unclouded and undiminished up to the present date. So great was his reputation in 1827, that if he had possessed the faculty of a Lopez de Vega as to facility and rapidity in composition, his yearly income might have been very ample. But he possessed no such facility, and he detested book-making.

The really bright hours above-mentioned were few and far between, and in exact proportion as his fame increased, and his intercourse with the world extended, the visits which he received from the inspiring muse were less and less frequent. I fancy this unfavourable change began when he left his

cottage on Sydenham Common. The world of London in its wisdom resolved to patronise Campbell; he was received there as a literary lion, and continued to be esteemed as such even to the close of his latterly feverish career. In certain coteries of high fashion and first-rate literary circles, the presence of the author of "The Pleasures of Hope" was considered indispensable. It was an honour for them to have him of the club, and of course the honours conferred were reciprocal. And there were not wanting publishers who, believing firmly that an author can *make* a book, on the same principle that a tailor elaborates a coat, or a cordwainer a pair of shoes, would propose to him this or that *job*, which, if speedily executed, and accompanied by his name, would be "sure to sell." But unluckily, such honours and such literary schemes *ad captandum* never harmonised with his feelings. He used rather to boast of his own fortitude, and, I suppose, had resolved, as a point of duty, to make the most of his opportunities; but he winced painfully under the required sacrifices. In short, the poet did not improve under the influence of life in London;—on the contrary, he appeared to me for the most part in a fretful state; for which, perhaps, the only radical cure would have been flight to the banks of Loch Awe, in his favourite Argyleshire, where he could have subsided into life in a cottage on his annuity of 180*l*., forgetting the very existence of a London world, or remembering it as a source of annoyance from which henceforward he would be free. But in every case there are secret springs or motives of

action, which, of course, no bystander can divine or estimate.

We continued to be near neighbours for the next three or four years; of which, considering the poet's very high reputation, a Boswell might have made as many volumes; but I have not left myself either space or time to dilate much on any particular character. As might be expected betwixt an author so pre-eminent and a supernumerary, we differed less or more on almost every point which occurred in conversation. My notions about the love of labour for its own sake, and about the great value and importance of contemporary foreign literature, were especially distasteful to him. He was fastidious in his choice of authors, and seemed to cleave to his early favourites and early associations; but with great good humour he bore with all my crotchets, and often used to look in during the evening when I was at work: sometimes remaining an hour, or only for a few moments, as humour dictated. Once I vexed him sadly by insisting that a three volume novel might well be written in a month, provided always that the author's attention was undistracted from his task;—to this he responded in his highest *falsetto* key that, according to his own experience, a year's time, instead of a month, would hardly suffice. Considering his aversion to book-making, it argued indeed no little fortitude that he achieved so many volumes in prose; but these were produced *invitâ Minervâ;* accordingly they are, I suppose, quite forgotten now, and his poems alone survive. His best hours, after I knew him, were spent at St. Leonards-on-

Sea, which he has commemorated in verse; but his spirits even then were much declined. His nervous system was indeed irritable to an extreme degree, and his hatred of street noise so great, that in Seymour-street he had a double window for his library, in hopes of excluding the nuisance.

I remember a remark of Mrs. Dugald Stewart, made as far back as the year 1807, namely, that Campbell never appeared to more advantage than when, "on hospitable thoughts intent," he received friends at his own house. This was quite correct. Unless their coming took him by surprise, and he had been previously *verstimmt*, on such occasions all traces of care, vexation, and irritability, vanished from his brow; he had only one purpose, which was to place before them, with lavish profusion, the very best of cheer which he had been able to obtain, and to let the conversation flow *sans gêne* and *à l'abandon*. It was little to be wondered at, then, if his literary and fashionable allies always showed alacrity in availing themselves of a summons to his convivial board. On one of these occasions, as I have already mentioned, I had the pleasure of hearing the favourable opinion of Sir Thomas Lawrence on Oehlenschläger's usually neglected tragedy of "Correggio."

At another time I happened to notice a brief, and as it may seem commonplace, remark of Mr. Rogers, which, nevertheless, dwelt on my remembrance, and, perhaps, had some influence on my future life. At dinner, during the first course, the conversation, by some chance, turned itself upon domestic economy, which, according to Mr. Rogers' opinion (not very novel

or original), was a first-rate and important virtue, an aphorism which, in one respect, might seem ill-timed, or too much *à propos*, seeing that we had then on the table an enormous turbot, with lobster sauce, and other luxuries, which, according to Campbell's habits, had been followed by a bottle of the very best Sillery. (But in his *every-day* domestic life, our host was a rigid economist, therefore could the better afford, on gala days, to entertain his friends.) The topic thus introduced, was kept up for a little while, till Mr. Rogers was led to say—"It is a prevalent error to suppose, that a literary man can successfully carry on his pursuits without capital. On the contrary, he requires it quite as much as any mercantile man, though perhaps not to the same extent." No wonder that this prosaic *dictum* of a wealthy and independent poet should dwell on my remembrance, seeing that I came to London to try the efficacy of literary pursuits, without capital, or, in Byron's better words, "without a stiver." A Shadow alone could properly estimate the substantial worth of Mr. Rogers' remark. Most assuredly an author needs capital, in order to lay in a stock of books; he needs it for the conservation of his own intellectual powers, otherwise any sudden reverse will paralyze him; he *must* have a reserved fund in his banker's hands, either of his own, or by the assistance of his friends; otherwise, instead of watching for and awaiting the chances, he will be forced into the market to drive bargains, wherein the purchasers will inevitably take advantage, offering less than half the reward which an independent author would have gained.

As my reader already well knows, I had only two objects in life, namely, hard-work (literary) and a "little tranquil home," terms which *sound* extremely modest and humble, but which, in the case of a poor author, imply a degree of soaring and exorbitant ambition, which throws that of Alexander and Philip and Xerxes and Cæsar and Napoleon into the shade! In my case, "tranquil home," simple as it sounds, was a very complexive term, for it included wife and children, who must be tranquil too, and without *argent comptant* this was impossible. The *dictum* of the wise, learned, and experienced Mr. Rogers was extremely discouraging, for, according to him, an author's hopes were vain unless he were supplied with what in Scotland is elegantly termed a "nest egg;" in other words, an already well-stored purse might be augmented in weight, but an empty one would never be filled. Yet, *per contra*, I had read divers authentic stories of individuals who had been *dépourvu de tout*, who "had not a stiver," and who nevertheless rose again in the world and became richer than they had been before. Moreover, I reflected on truths that had risen out of my own experience, and which, therefore, did not depend for their force on the opinion of Mr. Rogers or any one, namely, how often I had interposed with my security, whilst I still had substance, in order to uphold the chances for those who, at the moment, were on the verge of Shadowism. I was foolish enough to imagine that I had been rather hardly dealt with by those relatives who were instrumental to the loss of my hereditary acres, inasmuch as they declined to become bound in

my behalf for as many hundreds as in their own case I had raised thousands. I thought of minor instances —of one which occurred in the year 1814, when, had I not immediately, when the matter was mentioned, signed a bond to the Bank of Scotland for 500*l.*, Sir Walter Scott (as connected with John Ballantine and Co.), would have been subjected to some temporary inconvenience. But, *per contra*, I duly remembered that, having inflexibly withheld my name from every production, even from those translations from the German dramatists which had been so much extolled, I had little or no literary reputation; also, that one fit of severe illness might break up all my schemes. I had at least one source of consolation and of hope, namely, that I was *willing* to labour more than other people. Few concurred with me in my views on this point. Every morning I started fair in the race, if such an expression can be allowed for one who having taken his place at nine would not willingly have quitted his writing-table till four o'clock, and then only for a rapid walk. But either an immediate dun or some impending difficulty usually broke in before a single hour had elapsed. One interruption succeeded to another, as wave succeeds to wave, and day after day passed painfully and unprofitably in twisting ropes of sand.

CHAPTER XII.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.—VISIT TO LEE PRIORY.—RENEWED TROUBLES,—DICTUM OF MR. ROGERS.—LONDON ATTORNEYS.—RECOLLECTIONS OF HAYDON.

I NOW write egotism *non meâ causa sed aliorum*, as a comment on the wise text of Mr. Rogers, and a warning to others. It will be admitted that I made a bad beginning of life in London, which augured darkly for the future; and seeing that the case is so easily understood, it seems to me a duty to post through the events of the next seven years as rapidly as possible. As already said, I became gradually involved in a constant warfare with outward circumstances, the detail of which might fill several volumes, but would, I suspect, be very trying to the reader's patience.

On the whole, the winter of 1827-28 passed without any open manifestations of hostility; my prospects in the opinion of others were good, my credit was unbroken, and friends were kind enough to patronize the "Shadow." I entered little into society, scarcely accepting any invitations except those of my kind and respected neighbour, Mr. Archibald Macdonald, whose attentions I remember with sincere gratitude. I was averse to being from home even for a single hour, and might have adopted the phraseology of a certain citizen of the old school (named, I think, Joseph

Brasbridge), a character so important in his own estimation, that, though not in want of money, he published an autobiography, wherein it is recorded that every morning he was in the habit of saying, "Good morrow, Mr. Shop; let us take care of one another! I shall keep you, and you will keep me!" He persevered in his plans, I believe, and died "worth a plum;" but mine, as the reader may surmise, were disorganized and finally wrecked.

During the next six months, the only outward occurrence that cleaves to my remembrance is that of a visit of only one day to Lee Priory, the residence of Sir Egerton Brydges, who had then recently returned thither from a long tour on the Continent. Seventeen years had elapsed since my correspondence with him had first commenced. I had then what is termed independence, had, therefore, sufficient fortune, and wished to live for literature alone. *Now*, on the contrary, I was to pay my first visit at his house, in the poorest grade of Shadowism,—with no other "fee simple" left in my possession but that of unalterable will,—like the unfortunate mariner, who *in mind or heart* never deviated from his proper track, but who, nevertheless, finds himself disabled by stress of winds and waves, and, consequently, driven far away from the harbour of his hopes. In plainer terms, not merely houses and land, but even books, and peace of mind; and, in the wild language of Goethe's Tasso, "soul's identity" were all lost. I "had been," but except in the character of a dreary Shadow, "was no more." But Sir Egerton—that model of an English gentleman, whose memory is

most dear to all who knew him—that noblest of hearts, and bravest of spirits—to whom the relation in which I stood was that of worthless dross to the pure and brilliant diamond—had he himself escaped free from the effects of chance and change? Alas, no! The clouds that impended at Abbotsford during my brief visit there, hung darkly on the gothic halls and beautiful grounds at Lee. At one and the same time, pecuniary embarrassments weighed heavily both on Sir Egerton Brydges and Sir Walter Scott, and dissimilar as the two cases were in many points, upon one they were alike, namely, that both had been wronged and calumniated, also that both cherished under adversity a noble courage and uniformity of purpose.

The points of difference were marked and obvious, for Sir Egerton's literary pursuits had never in any instance been carried on with the remotest view to pecuniary gain. Sir Walter Scott, on the contrary, avowed himself to be "born and bred a man of business." Sir Egerton, though educated for the bar, had never practised; and I fear he held the character of a mere man of business in contempt. He had succeeded to old family estates; he claimed, with right, an ancient peerage; his property was extensive; for many years he represented Maidstone in Parliament, and his eldest son had inherited Mr. Barrett's beautiful estate of Lee. Sir Egerton had not suffered, like Scott, by the bankruptcy of a speculative and deceptive bookseller; but in the management of his estates he had been scandalously wronged by rapacious attorneys and

dishonest receivers; and of the embarrassments gradually thence arising, there were not wanting individuals who ascribed the whole blame to himself alone, although the entire tenor of his life, being devoted to constant intellectual exertions, was the very antithesis of luxury or vanity.

After several years' residence abroad, Sir Egerton had returned to Lee Priory, intending, I believe, to remain there, to continue his literary employments, and perhaps to resume his station in Parliament. But in England, if the plague-spot of a mortgage once exists on the family acres, it festers and spreads; with the help of "clever and respectable" men of business in the inns of court, one evil engenders another, till at last the very air seems empoisoned. The woods and fields appear tranquil, as of yore; but, alas! they are so, only for the disengaged mind of a casual spectator. Their owner is forced to view them through a darkening medium. The subjects which demanded Sir Egerton's attention after his return from the Continent, were such as to render his wonted pursuits impracticable. His disposition remained unchanged, his will was unalterable, but to give up his attention to literature became impossible. I presume he felt too keenly his sense of wrong, and the difference of his situation then from what it formerly had been. He declared that he felt his literary powers quite suspended, and seemed without hope of their re-animation. I feel convinced that had he not been persuaded by the late amiable and exemplary Colonel Barrett to return to the Continent, there could have been no such hope.

There has been no stage of these memoirs, at which I have more regretted being obliged to write in haste, than now. My recollections of Sir Egerton during a literary intercourse of twenty-five years, would require a separate volume, and I cannot at present write more than another page. But my remembrance is fresh and vivid of his kind and hospitable reception;—how many times in the course of that short evening, when "hours were thought down to moments," he reverted to the question, "Do not leave us,—do not go to-morrow;" and, when I urged dire necessity, added, "But, at all events, fix your day for coming again,"—and with what kind earnestness Lady Brydges proposed that my family would make Lee Priory their country quarters for next summer, "as at least there was room enough, and Sir Egerton would be so glad." These memoranda may seem too minute, too personal and particular, but, on the contrary, I think they should remain, not merely as feeble expressions of my own gratitude, but as evidence, to the honour of those deeply respected friends, that their kindness did not abate, though they well knew that, from being what is called "a man of substance," I had declined into dark, dreary Shadowism.

The next seven years form an epoch in my life, of which the interest was such, that probably the rigid censor will deem it right to be passed over in silence, as being of a nature too private and peculiar, wherewith no *respectable* readers can be expected to sympathise. I think very differently, however, and this for various reasons. As a very worthless feather may be exalted to show how the wind blows, the presence of

an insignificant Shadow may tend to bring out the leading characteristics of a very substantial world; and besides, as I have never met, during my long life, with experiences quite parallel to my own, I am consequently bound to believe that in some degree they are extraordinary.

For the better understanding of what is to follow, be it observed once more, that these were palmy days for authors. We had but few people who could write even passably well; and these few, if employed, were liberally paid: 1,000*l.* per annum was more easily gained, then, than 100*l.* per annum is now. With regard to foreign literature, I think there were not more than three or four authors in all London, who could even pretend to much power in that department. In my own particular case, whatever I was allowed either to write or to plan, received praise and encouragement, and this being undenied, the inference also became inevitable, that if allowed to write sufficiently, and carry out my plans, success would follow. On this ground arose a constant war of conflicting thoughts. The *dictum* of Mr. Rogers was ever on my mind. "A literary man requires capital quite as much as the merchant, though not, perhaps, to the same extent." Before an entire year had passed away, the truth of this aphorism was most painfully forced upon my attention. The question arose, shall I abandon utterly the prospects which appear so flattering, or seek some temporary aid among friends, not for *solatium vitæ*, but to enable the poor Shadow thereafter to work his own way; in plainer terms, to keep a roof over the heads of his

family, and to keep his own place at his desk without molestation?

I can conscientiously aver that I did not trust merely to impulses of my own heart, which might have been sadly delusive; but sought counsel from the wisest and best of the friends to whom I had access, a majority of whom decided that the ques ion which caused such painful perplexity should be fairly stated in black and white, namely—the prospects on one side, and impending difficulties on the other; also, that to provide against the latter, a fund ought to be raised, in shares, so moderate in amount—that no contributor would afterwards have to complain of his loss; in case, by mismanagement or misfortune—the flattering prospects should ultimately fade away into shadowism and darkness. The question being thus so kindly weighed and adjusted in my behalf, it might seem as if that most painful of all feelings, namely—that of an inward struggle, a heart-breaking antagonism, might end. But, unluckily, it was not so. Every step towards the accomplishment of this plan was, on my part, accompanied with an outward appearance of decision, and an inward repugnance and disgust so great, that all strength for literary employment declined. I felt every day worn out by the entirely new responsibilities, and unwonted duties that devolved on me. I would rather have worked for sixteen hours at a stretch, on the most difficult literary tasks, properly so called, than have written one page of a letter upon this financial scheme.

The needful letters were written, however, and in several instances cheerfully and favourably answered,

so that for some time it might have been supposed that in one respect matters wore *couleur de rose*. Without one word of solicitation on my part, Mr. Rogers himself was among the first to assist in this plan, writing, along with his liberal contribution, a few kind words, which greatly enhanced its value.

For the amount to be thus raised, having no longer any property to mortgage, I proposed, as security, a life insurance, and quarterly repayments into the hands of a trustee; but my kind supporters did not in any instance require this. During the summer of 1828, however, I became ostensibly a proprietor again, having been led to take the lease of a small house in Connaught-square, which was represented as a great bargain, such as would even rise in value. In short "it was a lucky chance," which would not occur again, and I removed thither accordingly, determining that I would henceforward cleave to it as my home.

As might have been foreseen, the financial plan which began so prosperously, was soon disorganized. Instead of 500*l.* (the proposed capital) only 250*l.* resulted, and as this arrived in small shares, and of necessity disappeared as fast as it came, the pressure from without was materially lessened, indeed, but not terminated. Meanwhile, however, I took sinfully and rashly to my books again, as if, forsooth, I had been independent, and, therefore, entitled to indulge in literary labour! Having raised about 250*l.*, I thought the best use I could make of my gasp of time was to write a hasty novel for 200*l.* more, which eventually was done, and would have been achieved fast enough had I been free from interruptions.

Again I repeat, that I had but one object, which appeared humble, but was in truth far too ambitious, namely a tranquil home. I had got into my head a peculiar and crotchety notion which I wildly imagined ought to be a catholic *dictum*, namely, that "labour was the poor man's capital!" that this was his indisputable *right*, in the just exercise of which he ought to have the protection of the law, and on the same principle, moreover, I insisted that he ought to be protected in the quiet possession of his workshop, and allowed to make the most of his time there uninterruptedly. Farther, I contended that if indebted, he ought to be compelled, if needful, to render an account of his time, labour, and prospects, for I would show no lenity to debtors unless their conduct proved them deserving of it. All this I knew to be in strict accordance with the existing laws of Germany, in towns where both credit and commerce throve under the system. I had not been long in London, however, before I discovered that the so-called law of England, or the admitted practice, contrary to law, was in violent antagonism with these doctrines. For, be it observed, if these were palmy days for authors, they were no less so for attorneys. At the most moderate computation, the annual amount of costs arising from arrest for debts was not under two millions! *Ostensibly*, attorneys were employed in order to force immediate payment from defendants by whom it was refused or delayed, but *in truth* their proceedings had, in most instances, an effect diametrically opposite, inasmuch as, by heaping up costs and imprisoning the debtor, they rendered the desired

adjustment impossible. By speedy settlement the creditor would have been benefited of course, but not so the attorney, whose own advantages depended on complicated operations, on protracted delays, and accumulating costs.

In those days, the affairs of poor struggling proletarians were the greatest source of gain to attorneys, who were sure of effecting their purpose either through defendant or plaintiff. I remember one instance of a bill of exchange, a good, honest bill for only 18*l.*, with four indorsations, which fell due at an awkward moment. The acceptor was forthwith arrested, and thereby rendered powerless; five writs were issued, and by swift degrees the costs on this one claim for only 18*l.* amounted to no less than 130*l.*, all of which were eventually paid. But such instances were not remarkable; they were constantly recurring in the office of every *respectable* attorney about town. To such practitioners, a contumacious, obstinate proletarian, or Shadow conceited of substance, was an especial windfall. They played him as the angler plays his gudgeon, on the hook, only with this difference, that every movement, every flounder of the victim afforded them not amusement merely, but pecuniary gain. The more that he pleaded his *will* but present inability to pay, and enlarged upon his prospects, the more they bullied "according to law," and inwardly chuckled according to pleasure. Or if disposed to be civil, they were "very sorry," no doubt, but really it was the Shadow's "own fault;" he should have been better prepared, and the creditor (who usually knew nothing more than that he

wanted his money) "was inexorable." At last, when the lottery chance of imprisonment had been duly tried, they had no wish to act harshly (good souls!) and if the Shadow were prepared to pay their costs only, they would kindly content themselves for the present, and advise their client to accept of a warrant for the debt payable by instalments. As misfortunes do not come singly, perhaps the poor wretch signed a score of these in a morning, and petty claims might eventually amount to 1000*l.*, which 200*l.*, applied properly and in time, might have set at rest for ever. It is almost needless to add, that if the slightest hitch or delay occurred, as to the stipulated payments on those warrants, onward again with a crash and a smash went the machinery of the law; again the poor Shadow was pining and fretting his heart away in prison, and the costs were accumulating *de novo*.

Such was the phasis of English practice "according to law," when a change took place in my own affairs against which no precautions had been adopted. In Scotland I had made a complete *cessio bonorum*, but there were not wanting creditors at Edinburgh, who believed, or affected to believe, that the streets in London were paved with gold, and that "money grew upon trees;" accordingly, certain malcontents had recourse to English attorneys, and followed up their claims with the utmost rigour. This was a *peripetia*, a shifting of the ground, on which I had not reckoned, and it was by these attacks first, that my chance for tranquillity and hard work was effectually broken up and destroyed. I have no time for entering into details, but shall only observe that the first

writ of execution sent into my London house, was at the suit of an old and intimate friend, for 30*l.*, with costs, making a *tottle* of 48*l.*, and that the last quotation of the entire sum before I got rid of the nuisance, was 88*l.* 12*s.*; but had not the attorney on that occasion been a man of integrity and honour, the expenses would have been a great deal more. In another instance, I was arrested, *sans cérémonie*, at the suit of an Edinburgh friend, whose autograph signature being affixed to my trust deed, his proceeding was therefore illegal, and having represented this fact in vain, I was brought under the necessity of applying to two friends to become bail; great expense and trouble having been thus incurred without one particle of advantage to the plaintiff. Such events, as I have said, were unforeseen, and they led to a train of complicated evils, which a few hundreds by way of capital at the outset might have completely averted.

During the year 1828 I had my intervals of sunshine and quiet. The new journal continued to prosper, and friends mustered round the "Shadow." I yet seem to behold the garden of this quiet square, as it appeared to me in the light of other days; and the trees of Hyde Park with their variegated tints in the decline of autumn, at which time I wrote much, and a plan of occupation was chalked out, which would have brought remuneration enough for all my needful expenditure, and a sinking fund for other claims. But this was not to be. I came to my work every morning with the consciousness that embarrassments

were impending, which no exertion of literary industry could enable me to meet. In the winter, too obviously, these menacing clouds came nearer, and I could only try to ward them off by temporary expedients, which recoiled in the following spring, the consequence of which was, that during the summer and winter of 1829, instead of attending to my duties as editor, and following up the tasks commenced in the quiet of 1828, I made repeated and long visits to Edinburgh, my purpose there being to raise 1000*l.* or 1500*l.* on the strength of my prospects, all the circumstances being submitted in writing to each lender, and the proposed shares, according to my original plan, being so small, that no one would have much need to regret his loss, if chance and change proved disastrous, and the prospects should be blighted.

On one occasion only was this rule departed from, and in that instance alone could my generous and kind supporter complain of serious risk or loss, the more so, because from the year 1829 till 1847 (seventeen years) I never revisited Edinburgh, nor sent thither any explanation of my fates and fortunes during that long interval. But he complained not; on the contrary, he forgave *where much was to be forgiven*, and on subsequent occasions has proved that his friendship was unalterable. It is hardly needful to say that had I known the world then as I know it now, or could I have foreseen the complicated workings of our so-called English law, the plans which led me to Edinburgh would never have been adopted. But I did not act without advice and sanction; for besides that of the kind and unalterable friend to

whom I have alluded, there were two or three influential members of the College of Justice, who treated the whole matter as a bagatelle, on which explanations were scarcely needed. One of them, who had himself suffered severely by joining in securities to a large amount with a speculator in the purchase of land, inquired of me whether there could be a moment's difficulty in selecting *ten* friends who would each risk 100*l.* in support of literary schemes, without security, or bestowing a second thought on the matter?

There were difficulties, however, and though these apparently were surmounted, the result, for many reasons, proved unsatisfactory. Provision was made by degrees against a certain amount of existing or menacing incumbrances. But processes begun before I left London, matured into *ca sa's* and *fi fa's* during my absence. My wife was robbed of 40*l.*, and one of my oldest and wealthiest acquaintances refused at last to ratify his own written engagement to the amount of 50*l.* On my arrival at home, I found, by conference with my attorney, that the costs, in one way or another accumulated during the last six weeks amounted to nearly 200*l.* In short, the liberal and kind aid I had received fell short of its intended purpose, for although the amount of my London embarrassments was materially lessened, quite enough remained to embitter my existence. I had gone to Edinburgh as the representative of urgent creditors, whose united claims made but a small amount, which without help I was unable to meet. I returned, as it was supposed, with enough for that purpose, but their attorneys had been, and continued to be,

quite as active in one way as I had been in another. By their excellent management claims were eventually augmented threefold and fourfold, and the various writs that were issued appeared numberless. As already said, their object ostensibly was to enforce a settlement, whilst in effect, their proceedings rendered this impossible. I could only stave off the processes and avoid remaining in prison by making partial payments to each, which were most politely received, seeing that there was a convenient residuum left as the basis for future operations. The Shadow was in the crucible, and by their alchemy (no matter what became of the clients) he would at all events be made into profitable substance for themselves. Within little more than twelve months, and upon claims which did not originally amount to so much as 500*l.*, thirty-five writs of execution were issued and served against me, the costs of which, at the lowest possible estimate, made 500*l.* more, a heavy tax which did not stop there, not to speak of other taxes, such as the expenses and miseries of prison and sponging houses. And as if all this had not been a crushing load, quite enough for the shoulders of any poor Shadow, there were not wanting certain *kind* acquaintances at Edinburgh, who superadded their load of obloquy, by ascribing such inordinate expenditure, *not* to operations of our admirable English law (of which truly they knew nothing) but solely and exclusively to the rather eccentric system of driving four-in-hand, and the daily inordinate use of "turtle and champagne!"

If any biographer can write his book without ego-

tism, he must indeed be clever to a wonderful degree. Luckily, however, the memoranda I have just now set down, remind me of an anecdote not quite egotistical, inasmuch as it refers to the late Mr. Haydon, at the time of whose death I resided in France. Happening one day to be in a bookseller's shop, a sort of rendezvous for the English who were in quest of news, I heard it observed by a certain magniloquent gentleman, who set up for an oracle, that "Haydon's distresses were little to be wondered at or pitied; his extravagance had been quite scandalous; he kept town house and country house, and was in the habit of driving himself out to the latter in a phaeton with a pair of spanking greys." Hereupon I put in a word,—"Pray, sir, were you much acquainted with Haydon?"—"No, sir." "Have you ever spoken with him, or been in his company?"—"No; but the truth is—" "The truth?—perhaps you will excuse my interruption when I add, that Mr. Haydon was my acquaintance and near neighbour for many years, and that I knew him well. According to my observations, his anxious efforts were so great and perpetual, in order to keep one humble roof over his family, and to keep himself out of prison, that by no possibility could he have room left in his mind for thoughts of any habitation elsewhere; and as to his driving himself out in a phaeton, he could sooner have thought of starting in a new career as a professional aeronaut." The fate of Haydon, after a long life of struggles with poverty, driven to suicide in advanced age, was commiserated by divers foreigners with whom I spoke on the subject; and they rather wondered that in

England such things could be! It was only among his own amiable countrymen that the knot of wonder was cut in the summary way which I have just now mentioned.

Even this anecdote leads me back to egotism. From the first week of my arrival in London, Haydon's fates and fortunes made a deep impression on my mind. At that time occurred his first protracted imprisonment; and Mr. Lockhart was active in putting together by subscription, a sum of 500*l.* to bring him out again, which was speedily done, there being a committee formed for the purpose, whose proceedings were published, and among whom the Earl of Ellesmere held a prominent place. In this I rejoiced, looking on it as an act of justice in favour of a man who had been cruelly used; but the impression was much deepened by the letters perpetually inveighing against imprisonment for debt, which Haydon afterwards published from time to time in the newspapers. In these he always laid especial stress on the aggravated wrongs and complicated miseries arising out of the system, by its effects on families who were left unprotected and destitute; a consequence upon which our wise Legislature never seemed to bestow one moment's thought.

Haydon did himself no good by these letters; they were all written in a tone at once cutting and querulous; which our excellent world by no means admired, and in each there was a good share of egotism, which was, without hesitation, ascribed to the writer's inordinate vanity. Here, again, according to my notions, was another example of cruelty

and injustice. The statements which he sent forth respecting the effects of imprisonment, were thoroughly true; and, as such, were not the less important, because expressed in a tone of bitterness and wrath. As to the charge of inordinate vanity, I felt convinced, that it did not justly apply to Haydon—(whose acquaintance I had made at Edinburgh), any more than it did to his poor maltreated predecessor—James Barry. Both, on the contrary, were severe task-masters to themselves. But each contended proudly for the dignity and importance of ART, especially as exemplified by the historical painter;—and this they did in a country where, professedly, we are the most enlightened, civilized, and liberal of people; but where, in very truth, our sensitivity for Art (or respect for its votaries) is, generally speaking, not much more developed than that of the Cossac or the Hottentot: Haydon was perpetually kicking against this phasis of *savageism*; and insisting that matters ought not to be so. Matters, however, did not mend under his censorship. When James Barry had fallen, at last, into abject poverty, he also complained and quarrelled with the world, forgetting how much the odds were against him; and, when he crawled out in his ragged coat to procure food, he used to find, on his return, that charitable neighbours had broken his windows, and stuffed the key-hole of his door with mud; so that, having no servant, he could not obtain ingress. This was a right merry jest—*à la mode Anglaise!* Haydon had his share of the mud, but in another way. His just invectives and arguments against imprisonment were construed into splenetic

effusions of an extravagant debtor, who was unwilling to pay; and every tirade which he uttered in his lectures, or letters, in support of the neglected cause of Art, was "put down" as an ebullition of egoism and personal vanity.

At first the exhibition of his "Entry into Jerusalem," and other large pictures, turned out profitable, for it was something new, and our public delights in novelty. But of course the novelty changed in time; no one offered a competent price for the works exhibited; then came domestic troubles, discontent, debt, and imprisonment. And out of those evils arose good, for John Bull rather likes to befriend "for once and away" any man who falls into extreme trouble. There might be some novelty in this too. But the world will not stand a repetition of such disasters. A committee might once be formed, with a noble lord at the head thereof, for the eccentric purpose of bringing a painter out of the King's Bench; but supposing the said lord to have 200,000*l.* per annum, it is not to be expected that he would take this extraordinary trouble a second time. And, unluckily, Haydon's troubles constantly menaced and recurred, as wave succeeded to wave, and he was advised to renounce the higher walks of "Creative Art," and subside into portrait painting, in order that he might keep the wolves from his door.

Yet he sold a picture now and then for a high price. Fortune knocked at his door, and left her card in this fashion. But it was only a flying visit, little better than a runaway knock. Next minute she might be found in close friendly *confab* at a swindling

speculator's office, or perhaps at a gaming table. And after the 500*l.* which fortune had thus left in his hands, being all bespoke, had been applied carefully so far as it would go, till it was all spent, then there would follow long months of unremunerated labour, of day-dreams perhaps, and menacing clouds, and new debts and wants. Long life, as Byron has observed, is awkward for the poor. We begrudge it to them, and say, "they should have died." Haydon seemed to me a man framed for long life. He had much vivacity of spirits, and in figure was compact, square, and muscular. Barring accidents or apoplexy, he might have been youthful at fourscore, like Michael Angelo. But, *per contra*, he was irritable, nervous, and sensitive. I never knew any one more easily "put out of his way," or more apt to be unhinged and overset by a disappointment or affront.

For thirty-five years he had contended with the waves of "chance and change." At three-score years of age, he saw lowering at a short distance the same fate that befell him in 1827, namely, imprisonment for debt—pictures unsold—his family left helpless—and with frenzied speed he wrote divers letters for some temporary help. The result was detailed in all the newspapers of the time; but I think it is almost forgotten now. Sir Robert Peel *alone* responded by an immediate enclosure of 50*l.* Haydon sealed it up with the caution of a husband and father, and waited the result of his other painful letters; but he had "lived too long." He had hopes of Lord B—, he had misgivings about A—, he knew not what to

think of D. and C. But on one point there could be no doubt. Day after day dawned and declined. The postman came and went; but he did not receive another line from any of his former patrons. They all "sported mute;" they did not even think it needful to despatch the usual negative *formula* on such occasions; to wit, "very sorry—but numerous claims on their finances," and so forth.

His recent exhibition of a large picture had proved an utter failure, for the receipts did not even pay for room-rent. But next door to the picture (under the same roof if I recollect right) was then lodged an abortion—a living abortion, most wittily and facetiously denominated "General Tom Thumb." The "public at large," with all their wives and daughters, were enchanted with this creature. He was even invited to court and patronized by her Most Gracious Majesty. Within a year or two, the dwarf retired with a baronial fortune. He had more money showered into his treasury-box within that short space than any historical painter in England ever earned during his whole life. After thirty-five years of hard-working experience, such (for Haydon) was our world! Possibly enough, he might have lived for twenty-five years longer; but weariness and disgust overcame him. He did not, however, break his daily habits nor forget his cherished purposes. He continued his diary up to the last hour; he left his instructions; he wrote a farewell letter to his wife, with Sir Robert Peel's 50*l.* unbroken. The world (Peel excepted) not only left him to starve whilst they idolized Tom Thumb, but threatened again to arrest and imprison

him like a felon. Under these bitter impressions, having been his own hard task-master, he got out of the bailiff's reach by becoming his own executioner.

After my return from France, in 1847, happening to allude to this event in conversation with one of those very friends who had assisted Haydon in 1829, he seemed all of a sudden to become irritable, drew himself up, and replied contemptuously, "Poh, poh! the man was mad—that 's all!" Truly, a very compendious *formula* for settling a moral question, and very much *à la mode Anglaise.* On such occasions our favourite manner of "going a head" is to dismiss argument and move *per saltum.*

CHAPTER XIII.

A NEW NOVEL.—MR. HALLS.—GENERAL MACDONELL.—HURLEY AND A PRISON SCENE.—JOHN WHARTON, M.P.—SIR EDWIN BAYNTUN SANDYS, OF MISSENDEN PARK.

RETURNING to town at Christmas 1829, I resolved that being once more at home, I would cleave thereto, and make the most of my poor attainments. I had means enough to purchase a lull of the storm at all events, and this was done. As to literary pursuits, the first use I made of my little gasp of time was to finish a book, "Basil Barrington" for which Mr. Colburn had already paid me 200*l.* before it was written. But it was eventally spoiled, not for want of good will or industry on the part of the author, but because during the whole time which ought to have been devoted to it (namely, the six months previous), I was inevitably occupied in pecuniary arrangements, and in travelling about from London to Edinburgh, from Edinburgh to Aberdeen, and *vice versâ*. At length my publisher became impatient for his book, which ought to have been completed long ago, and I fed the press with hasty scrolls till the stipulated number of pages were filled. Thus it turned out little better than a piece of mere mechanical work, and a good opportunity was lost.

About this date (1830) commenced a new epoch in my life, of which by itself alone the records would

require an entire volume, but which, of course, must be past over with only a slight notice at present. Considering the inordinate expense of law processes, which turned out to be solely for the benefit of attorneys; considering also the interruptions and personal molestation to which I was constantly liable, I began to think in my own case precisely as Haydon did in his, that however speciously cloaked under the name of law and justice, such proceedings were contrary to existing law, and were in truth dishonest, flagitious, and unjust. And, supposing this to be true, it followed obviously that the question was one of no little importance, inasmuch as this kind of injustice might and did affect the interests of many others as well as my own.

I have said most truly that the deep impressions thus made on my mind, resulted less from my own sufferings, than from obvious effects of the precious system upon others. Haydon's case fell back into the shade, and became as nothing compared with those which I afterwards watched, and, of which alone, the records would fill several volumes. I certainly was not alone in my discontent, nor was I quite without collaborators in my efforts for the utter destruction of the system. Among the latter was one of my most stedfast friends, for whose memory I cherish sincere and deep respect, I mean the late Mr. Thomas Halls, magistrate of Bow-street Police-office, a man of unblemished honour and sterling worth, who in an evil hour had been induced to lend his name along with a brother magistrate to some plausible speculations, over the management of which

he had himself no control, and which of course failed, involving him to a large extent.

By natural association of thoughts, I am led to speak of this instance at present, although my acquaintance with Mr. Halls did not commence till the era of his misfortunes, which took place several years afterwards. The speculations for which he had been a collateral surety having failed as above mentioned, Mr. Halls forthwith called a meeting of his creditors (or more properly of the crafty speculator's), in order to make them a distinct and final proposition, which was as follows:—

"My official income is 1,000*l.* per annum, and in favour of all having claims upon me, I will ensure my life for the full amount of the debts. I will besides enter into a bond to set apart henceforth, 500*l.* of my said income for a twofold purpose, first, to pay the regular premium of insurance; second, to make a sinking fund in a banker's hands for gradual liquidation of the debts. Thus, if God spares my life, you will be paid in full, though by degrees, and if I die, the whole will be paid at once. This is the best and only offer within my power, and I will abide by it."

His proposal was not accepted. A large majority, it is true, were in favour of the motion, but a *select* few demurred, and these, no doubt, had consulted with their attorneys. The debtor, however, took special care that his offer should be duly understood *and recorded.* Notwithstanding all his knowledge of our English world, I suppose, he hardly thought it possible that any creditors could be so wild and mad as to *persist* in repudiating an offer like this; but there

were two or three who did so. Good souls, though rather crazy and ill-advised, they were not perverse or malevolent; they, forsooth, wanted only their money, and as the magistrate daily attended his official duties, they found no difficulty in arresting him, and they did so. This being considered according to law, it was of course perfectly right. Mr. Halls could not by any possibility resume his station in the court; he could not properly apply to the Crown for leave of absence, because it was impossible for him to fix any time for his return to duty. The result was, that, though then in perfect health, (which did not last long,) he was forthwith placed on the superannuated list, with no other income than his retiring pension. For a long series of years he had never been an entire day absent from his home, but now, his family were left disconsolate and unprotected.

No murmur escaped him. As a barrister, he well understood the existing system. By no outward sign did he manifest his deep sense of his own wrongs;—rather, like Sir Thomas More, he seemed almost impassive to outward impressions of evil; but the "iron had entered into his soul." He was naturally of a proud and independent spirit, and had fought his way up-hill in the world, respected by all who knew him, for his integrity, generosity, and indefatigable patience as a man of business. He scorned to petition the Insolvency Court; and in his lonely room bore his misfortunes in silence; but these were very trying. About that period, his favourite son died, (at the age of nearly fifteen), and other events occurred, which were deeply afflicting. As a direct and almost inevi-

table consequence of his confinement and mental sufferings, there came, at length, an attack of severe and dangerous illness—a neuralgic fever—during which, medical men gave up the case, as hopeless; but he recovered, *with an almost entire loss of sight!* The good harmless creditors, the select few who meant no mischief, but only desired to have their money, had, with the help of London attorneys, and the law of arrest, effected very different purposes. They had brought upon a worthy and honourable man, a load of irretrievable injuries to mind, body, and estate: they had for ever blighted his prospects, and made desolate the home of a whole family. The law of arrest had enabled them to effect these amiable purposes; but, therewith, they must rest contented; for, it would do no more for them—they had not one sixpence of pecuniary gain; on the contrary, had, in that respect, injured themselves, and compromised the interests of other creditors, who would gladly have accepted the offer of entire indemnity as made by the debtor.

But exactly at that time (2nd Vict.), took place an important change in the said law. Arrest on mesne process was abolished; and, by the same, or a simultaneous act, creditors acquired the power of summoning their debtors before the Insolvency Court for examination, if they thought proper to do so; only, this must be done at their own risk, and the debtor might appear or not, as he liked. As new brooms sweep clean, this new act was acted upon in the case of Mr. Halls—whether by an opposing or friendly creditor I do not remember,

and though no sufferings would have induced him to *petition* for a hearing, he instantly accepted the invitation to appear. Pale, emaciated, almost blind, he was guided into Court; where, so clear was the evidence in his behalf, that the examination scarcely occupied above a few minutes. Indeed, there was needed no further evidence than the records of the meeting already mentioned, when complete security had been offered and rejected. He had been solvent; but the law of arrest, by depriving him of his liberty, robbed him also of an ample income, and nearly of his life. The case was too marked in its features, and opposition would have proved in vain. The Court left his retiring pension untouched; and, in the language of another tribunal, the defendant stood fully and honourably *acquitted*. Within one year he had been deprived of a respectable and lucrative station, irretrievably lost his health, and been reduced to comparative poverty; whilst the precious law of arrest, which had effected all this, of course, left the creditors without a shilling.

Mr. Halls retired to a humble apartment at Camden Town, where yet, as I hoped, his health would recover. Naturally, he seemed framed for long life, but his constitution had been quite broken, and he survived but a short time. To this deeply respected friend I owe the best assistance and advice I ever received in my various publications on the law of arrest, from all of which, for obvious reasons, and as already said, my name was withheld. Our last interviews were in 1840, when, with great reluctance, I left London for France.

I have said already that the deep impressions I received upon this subject resulted less from annoyances caused to myself personally, than from observation of the system's effects upon others. But to particularize such instances, or even a share of them, in this hasty work, would be impracticable, seeing that three volumes would be needed for that purpose alone. Besides, I am quite sure that some of those, if recorded, would appear incredible; for example, that of my late lamented friend General Macdonell, some incidents from whose life in London formed the basis of one of my stories, entitled "O'Hanlon and his Wife." Commenting on it in a notice of Fraser's Magazine, a provincial critic used the following words: "A painful narrative powerfully written, but it is to be regretted that the author did not keep his fiction more within the bounds of probability!" Instead of being fictitious, the events therein were facts drawn from stern reality, as my friend Mr. J. Palmer Parken yet lives to witness; and strange to say, the concluding lines of the story (though little intended as such) proved prophetic. I will not repeat all those incidents here, though much tempted to do so; but I cannot dismiss General Macdonell's name without adding a short tribute to his memory.

In early life, as a cadet of a Catholic family, and being destined, if I mistake not, for the church, he studied at Valladolid, where he became an excellent linguist, profoundly read in history, and a severe critic. Preferring the sword to the pen, and having entered the service of "His most Christian Majesty" during the Peninsular war, he distinguished himself

on many occasions in such degree, not for bravery alone, but military talents, that with unexampled rapidity he rose to the rank of Brigadier-General. Thus far, his career much resembled that in early life of Lord Clive; he was equally daring, chivalrous, and intelligent. But when the wars were entirely over, and his talents were no longer needed, what was to be done? In an evil hour he quitted Spain, which had become to him like a second *natale solum*, and appeared in London with some expectations that the government of his own country would recognise his undeniable services under a foreign crown for a common cause, and offer him some reward. Towards the accomplishment of this purpose he possessed the highest testimonials that could be penned. There was a tone of energy and feeling rarely exampled in the various certificates written in his favour by his brother officers, the Marquis d'Alava, Lord Hardinge, Lord Beresford, General Brown, and others whose names I cannot now recall. But neither place nor pension awaited him. The only recompense which all these testimonials obtained for Macdonell, was a donation for "once and away" of 250*l.*; and having rashly married since his return, he found himself and family as unprovided for in our excellent world of London, as if he had no talents, and had never served. Under these circumstances, and as a means of subsistence for his family, he was advised to become a Spanish wine-merchant, a suggestion truly *à la mode de Londres*, where in times of peace military talent is sadly at a discount. It was an employment which he despised; however he took ample premises near the

clubs, laid in a large stock of wine, and was soon favoured by orders from noble lords, knights of the Bath, and all sorts of "influential and fashionable" people. Military and mercantile talents are, I suspect, rather incongruous, and the business soon became embarrassed. It might have progressed, however, and though without much gain, he might have continued to keep a house over his head, had his customers all been as ready to pay as they were to patronize, but it was not so. Becoming involved, and knowing nothing of legal machinations or chicanery, he was arrested; immediately thereafter his house and cellars were invaded by the sheriff's respectable officers, and his wife and children brought under the necessity of flying from the premises to seek refuge in a servant's cottage at Chelsea.

Oh truly, the cherished law of arrest manifested its peculiar efficacy in the case of General Macdonell, quite as well as in that of Mr. Halls! Widely different as the two instances were in other respects, the character of our precious system, on both occasions, maintained itself *totus et integer!* From the instant of his imprisonment, losing all management of his own affairs, he trusted, of course, to agents, who deceived and betrayed him. It happened that a certain creditor wished to establish an undue preference over all the rest,—he desired to claim the whole stock in short; but in order to do this it would be necessary to place Macdonell *hors de combat*, to blacken his character beyond retrieval, and send him as a criminal out of England. Circumstances rising naturally out of his situation, with the help of clever

attorneys, rendered a plot for this purpose very feasible. Among various debts due to the prisoner, was one of 50*l.* from a noble lord (whose name I forget), to whom application for payment had often been made in vain. At last, during Macdonell's confinement, when one of his children died, and his wife had not means even to inter the body, his lordship paid the money *to her.* But about that same date, a process in bankruptcy was issued against Macdonell, of which, when he applied for payment, he knew nothing, and of which when his wife received the money, she was utterly ignorant.

Upon this basis the intended machinations against Macdonell became easy; for, supposing that the money which his wife in her distress received and appropriated had then become due to the Court of Bankruptcy, the noble lord might become liable to an action for payment of it a second time. The smallest portion of truth, with a convenient admixture of falsehood, will always suffice for the groundwork of a malevolent process: for example, Macdonell was a Catholic, his wife a Protestant; their marriage had been solemnised in France by a Catholic priest, and never by any English parson. *These were undeniable facts,* and according to a peculiar system of logic much approved in this country, the conclusion was quite obvious and convenient that there existed not any marriage. "This unprincipled man, in partnership with a degraded woman, had formed a conspiracy to defraud a noble lord of 50*l.*," and of course, his poor helpless lordship must be protected. Farther, this dangerous man bore the title of general;

but search the army lists as you would, or apply to Coxe and Greenwood, he was not to be traced—he never had been in the king's service, and yet was no foreigner. These were undeniable facts, and the conclusion again was convenient and obvious: he never had been a military officer,—on the contrary, was a base impostor!

Upon the utterly false and infamous charge of conspiracy with intent to defraud, was Mrs. Macdonell arrested, and in a state of health which ought to have wrung compassion even in behalf of a criminal, having no protector, she was linked with felons, and along with them conveyed to Clerkenwell Jail, where she suffered for five weeks. Macdonell remained in the King's Bench Prison, where the surviving children took refuge with their father. The conspirators against him trusted to his being utterly penniless, and deserted by all the world, therefore unable to procure counsel for his defence; and *too nearly*, they were in the right. But by mere chance an obscure Shadow who had been ignorant of the machinations above-mentioned till it was almost too late, came at the eleventh hour to the rescue! In plainer language, I learned the circumstances only one clear day before that appointed for the trial, and had little enough time to obtain through Mr. Parken the services of Mr. Clarkson, who told us from the outset, "there was nothing in the case, it was a mere attorney's trick, whether for the sake of costs, or to promote interested motives of other parties, we needed not to enquire."

I remember, as of yesterday, that trial, which took place at Clerkenwell Sessions, in the calm, beautiful

weather of declining Autumn. I remember our two days' attendance before it could come on, and how Macdonell's enemies regularly assembled in conclave, filling the parlour of a neighbouring pot-house with their witnesses, for the support of absolute lies, in order to ruin him. I remember, as of yesterday, Mr. Alley's vituperative charge—how he pointed to the "man and woman at the bar," and to his heart's content, as in the fulfilment of his duty, proved them to be conspirators and criminals of the worst description. And I forget not Macdonell's visage, which expressed the indignant ferocity of a lion; but, alas, in the war of words, he would have been no match for his opponent; anger and contempt would have superseded argument and choked his utterance. No sooner had Mr. Alley sat down than Mr. Clarkson requested leave to make a few observations, which would probably save the Court much needless trouble. Very completely did he justify his own words, that "there was nothing in the case." Within five minutes or less he had sifted his learned brother's harangue, and proved that he was without legal foundation for carrying out any one of his points. The machinations for the trial were stopped *in limine*, for Mr. Alley had come into court without ground to stand upon. Not one shadow of guilt was justly imputable to the "man and woman at the bar," but on the contrary, a heavy responsibility rested on the parties who had instigated this most vexatious and malevolent action. Brother Alley rose in a pretended fury, but Mr. Clarkson floored him again with the utmost calmness. The trial began and ended here, and did not last

more than half an hour, affording to my mind a memorable example of the iniquities (say rather atrocities) which in this country arose (and still arise) indirectly or directly out of the law of arrest for debt. For, be it observed, had Macdonell remained at liberty, such machinations against him would have been impossible. The evils of imprisonment are always complexive and manifold, to the ruin of families and estates, one evil rapidly engendering another, and wrong succeeding to wrong.

This trial being ended, Macdonell of course had the protection of the Bankruptcy Court, and soon afterwards was restored to liberty. In the course of next winter, I earnestly advised that he should write his recollections of the Peninsular War for publication, to be supported at the outset by subscription among his military friends. Next year he had arranged his plan; a prospectus was drawn which I took forthwith to a printer, and before another week was over, he had conferences on the subject with the present King of Hanover, and divers other individuals of high rank, by whom his military career and character were well remembered. The prospectus was so much approved, that within a few days he had nearly 100*l.* at command.

But to his great satisfaction, public events in Portugal and Spain gradually opened again that professional path, which it before seemed as if peace had closed against him for ever. He chose to support Don Miguel, went abroad as General-in-Chief, won an important battle, and because schisms thereafter broke out in the camp, resigned his command and re-

turned to England, but not to idleness. From that epoch till the hour of his death, his mind was constantly occupied with affairs either of Portugal or Spain. After the lapse of years and many vicissitudes, having reassumed the command of the Miguelite forces, his successes during the winter of 1846-47, were such as to render him too truly a *marked* as well as distinguished man. It was quite evident that the Miguelite cause was gaining ground, and equally clear that so long as Macdonell retained his authority it would never be allowed to sleep, consequently, the most acceptable service that could be rendered to the existing government, would be to put an end to his life as soon as possible. At last his usual prudence in military matters seemed to have forsaken him, but I presume the quantum of caution in regard to personal safety, has always been much less than that of daring courage in the conduct of every brave man. Having gone out early in the morning to reconnoitre, with only a few attendants, he was suddenly overpowered by a troop of horse. In a manner the most savage and cowardly, his assailants used their superior force, for they well knew that by assassinating Macdonell, they paralysed or terminated the Miguelite cause, probably for ever. He and his few companions were surrounded, cut down, and butchered; but, possibly enough, if offered a choice, he would have preferred this fate to imprisonment.

In ordinary life, men of high talents are very surely viewed through a false medium, nay, for their superiority are even detested; — they are *de trop;* they are not wanted there. On occasions of public

difficulty and danger, or of important enterprize, their value is proved. Remove any such man by stratagem or assassination, and his real value is farther proved, for you cannot find another; he has no representative; he is gone and for ever. You may, indeed, find a score of officers who can defend a station and give the word of command, and they may have soldiers who would not run away; but the daring, the intelligent, the enthusiastic, the inflexible leader, when once lost, returns no more.

I have said more than once, that my examples drawn from real life to illustrate the effects of imprisonment for debt, would alone occupy volumes. But why multiply such? In his capacity of Chief Justice, Sir Matthew Hale averred "it were better that one hundred guilty should escape, than that one innocent should be punished." And it was among the *dicta* of Charles James Fox, that "what is *morally* wrong never can be politically right." Supposing that these eccentric *dicta* were in our enlightened age accepted as true, would not the case of Mr. Halls alone, without one other instance, be perfectly sufficient to stamp with indelible infamy the legislature of a country where such a system is cherished? If that example stood as an isolated exception; if there did not occur in the course of every year hundreds of cases wherein the most atrocious injustice is perpetrated under the cloak of so-styled law, there might be a specious plea of utilitarianism, and expediency against Sir Matthew Hale. If the practice did not tend to demoralize the whole nation, by repudiating

the distinctions betwixt right and wrong, if it did not annually reduce hundreds of families to destitution and crime, and if the supposed gains by the system were not infinitesimal, compared to its enormous load of evil, there might be a specious plea of expediency. But there is in reality no such plea. Like other abominations, it is perpetuated by ignorance, misrepresentation, fraud and falsehood. Instead of deterring proletarians from incurring debts, it is avowedly made use of as a means of establishing false confidence and rash credit, and in default of payment, no sooner is the writ of arrest "satisfied" by the debtor's captivity, than the prisoner naturally feels that his creditor has taken an undue revenge; that being entombed alive, and utterly debarred the power of exertion, ruined in character, and injured in health, he is absolved from duties which he no longer can even attempt to fulfil. Instead of wishing, as before, to liquidate the claim, he uses whatever means are left him to evade it, and thinks it is overbalanced by the injuries which he has received. Yet up to the present hour this practice is cherished! Despite of the yet living voices of Cottenham, Denman, Campbell, Pollock, and Sugden, which have been raised against it, despite of the examples afforded by all the States of America and Germany, the system goes on, though, it is true, at a broken and uneven pace.

How many death-beds in prison have I witnessed or authenticated, in every such instance death being either caused or accelerated by confinement and its attendant miseries! I remember especially the case of a poor man named Hurley, well educated and of

amiable manners, who was brought into the loathsome apartments of the sheriff's prison, labouring under asthma and nervous debility. This man had striven hard to keep a house over his head, and to maintain an aged mother, a sister and cousin, but he could not help falling a little into arrear, his whole debts being about 100*l.* He brought with him the certificate of Dr. Elliotson and another medical man, to prove that, in their opinion, removal from his home would tend greatly to increase his maladies and to shorten his life. With bitterness he told me that these proofs had been exhibited for his protection to the creditor, the attorney, and lastly to the sheriff's-officer, by all of whom equally they were treated with contempt. Poor victim! During the first day, from excitement, he bore up bravely, and expressed his opinion that the doctor might be mistaken, but as had been predicted, the worst symptoms soon appeared; appeals were made to the creditor in vain, and Dr. Elliotson declined to visit him, saying that his attendance in prison would be useless. He became hourly worse, and in a few days was no more. My brave and generous friend Major C. no doubt remembers, as I do, the last moments of that poor man, when we were his attendants. The creditor and the sheriff (through his officer) had both been warned by high medical authority, that imprisonment would aggravate the debtor's disease, consequently would endanger and shorten his life, but they persisted, and accordingly the man died. Was not this in reality a mode of deliberate murder? As for the sheriff, it is true that in such instances he "can do

no wrong," for he is bound to return *the body* of the victim sound or unsound, dead or alive, it matters not; and some years ago, part of his practice was to seize and return dead bodies, upon the speculation, I presume, that relations might buy them back again.

Search over all the States of Europe, and will it be possible to find a practice, under the name of law, exhibiting a grade of wildness, madness, and *savageism*, equal to this? Look across the Channel, or look across the Tweed! In France, when the debtor is turned of three-score, he cannot be arrested; and, in other instances, when illness afflicts him, if not immediately liberated, he is transferred to one of the public hospitals: in Scotland, if any physician or surgeon attests that prolonged confinement will endanger the debtor's health and life, the writ of caption becomes invalid, and within twenty-four hours he is set at liberty. Truly, England, in regard to this question, stands pre-eminent and alone!

These remarks, I know, are *truisms:* but, what is more, they will certainly be "put down" as the splenetic murmurings of a Shadow, who rails at the world to which he no longer belongs. They are, however, strictly applicable to the cases which now crowd on my remembrance, of individuals once distinguished but fallen in estate; who had long been flattered, followed, and extolled; and who, no sooner entered within the prison gates, than they were subjected to the ban of social excommunication, and were left there to wear out the remainder of their days, from all quarters calumniated, vilified, and persecuted. In fact, the degree of malignity evinced

on such occasions, seems to be in very exact proportion to that of over-estimation in which they were before held.

I remember, for example, how John Wharton, of Skelton Castle, M. P., was, for a long series of years, applauded among the Whig circles. He was heir of entail to the estates of Sterne's patron and boon companion—John Hall Stephenson; but succeeded afterwards to another large property, in money and land, on account of which he took the name of Wharton. During twenty-five or thirty years he held his place in Parliament for the borough of Beverley, residing every season in Grosvenor-square, where he almost kept open house. Now this was wrong, no doubt, he might have fulfilled his parliamentary duties quite as well if, like the late amiable Mr. Davis Gilbert, he had limited his household expenses within 200*l.* per annum, and occupied a dusky lodging in Cannon-row, or Manchester-buildings. It would have been wise, also, if he had nursed the income arising from his large estates, instead of loading it with incumbrances, and had deposited his large inheritance of *argent comptant* in the coffers of the old lady of Lothbury, where it would insensibly have augmented. But he did not see the wisdom of such arrangements till it was too late, till he no longer could meet the expenses of a contested election, and ruin stared him in the face; but what is more remarkable, our good, sharp-sighted world did not perceive his errors and failings till then. On the contrary, they had cheered him in his downward career, had sung out, "*Euge, bene, perge!*" and only found out that he was undeserving

of their applause when the long series of good dinners in Grosvenor-square came to its close. Then, truly, they chopped round with a vengeance, and yelled against him.

His conduct, no doubt, had been very unwise; in his stewardship of wealth, he had forgotten to take adequate care of "number one," and it was, therefore, little to be wondered at if, in his rashness, he overlooked the claims of some others. But setting aside all considerations of humanity, on what principle of utilitarianism his confinement for the remainder of his life could be defended, I never could discover. To this hour, I cannot see what good purpose was effected thereby. He remained for eighteen years in prison, many times wanting even the necessaries of life; and he died there. In his own character he was unchangeable; even during the severest trials, his generosity and kindness of heart were unbounded.

One more example, and then I shall break off from this unpopular and unfashionable subject. I shall name only Sir Edwin Bayntun Sandys, of Missenden-park, who remained in prison for nearly twenty consecutive years, and who, at the time of his arrest, happened to be High Sheriff of his county, so that, in the course of so-called law, it fell to his lot officially to sign his own committal. How that technical *embarras* was got over, I do not know. But he might have signed it without hesitation, for although he detested imprisonment for debt, and justly regarded it as a vicious innovation on the law of the land, yet, rather inconsistently, he was an uncompromising stickler for the honour of England, and in his own

person was the most impracticable subject that an angry, vindictive creditor, could have to deal with. His amenity of temper, patience, and equanimity, were unconquerable. During an intercourse of ten years, I have known him to be many times severely tried, but never, on any occasion, did his good humour appear to be upset or even ruffled. He kept up industriously a correspondence with members of the senate and cabinet on the evils of the system; on the complicated iniquity, misery, immorality, and destitution which he witnessed around him, and in agitating this question he forgot his individual sufferings. No doubt his detaining creditors had, at the outset, comforted themselves with the notion that—

> "He that has not goods to tyne,
> Has yet flesh to pyne."

But they failed even in this amiable purpose. Not being friendless, he was enabled to reside for most of his time at No. 1, Lambeth-road, within the Liberty of the Rules, where I have spent many pleasant hours. The law of arrest, equally foolish as it is cruel, did not even afford his creditors the Christian-like satisfaction of rendering Sir Edwin a miserable man. Over his tankard of beer he could be as contented as at Missenden Park, with Sillery and Epernay. He staid in Lambeth-road so long that he out-lived almost all his assailants; consequently did not, like John Wharton, end his days as a prisoner.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONTINUED WARFARE.—ANECDOTE OF A MORTGAGE.—MR. THOMAS ROSCOE.—DR. BOWRING.—SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

CLEAVING to home (or the ideal of home) with the pertinacity, as aforesaid, of a limpet to the rock, I remained for nearly seven years in the same house. Through that whole time, paradoxically, but truly speaking, I had constant vicissitude and constant sameness of life; the sameness being that of a voyage through troubled waters, against wind and tide, with rocks and breakers perpetually a-head; the vicissitude consisting principally of expedients and frenzied efforts to avoid a sudden and final "smash." According to my own peculiar notions of autobiography, the log-book of such a voyage,—the faithful chronicle of its changes and of emotions thence arising,—the momentary glow of success, the deep depression of failure, the hair-breadth escapes, the anxious hours, the hoping against hope that fades away, would make a book not uninteresting to some readers. But I am told it would be excessively ungenteel and unfashionable; and it would, therefore, be absurd to think of such a thing.

Setting aside the marine metaphor, this was most decidedly a life of continued warfare. I desiderated

only peace; I would, absolutely, have the use of my own house, and liberty to work there unmolested; but our excellent world, assisted by its attorneys, would not admit of any such Utopian crotchets: I was obstinate and so were they. Instead of being a lover of peace, quiet, and order, I gradually gained the public reputation of being the most contumacious, quarrelsome, uproarious desperado ever known in our district of town! Instead of limiting my utmost wishes and my family expenses to an income of 400*l.* per annum, which I might then have most easily earned, if allowed time and tranquillity to do so, I gained the renown of being the most persevering and extravagant of spendthrifts. Every attorney's bill of costs was set down against me to the account of daily turtle, champagne, and the four-in-hand turn-out!

Sometimes I most contumaciously resolved that I would have the use of my own house in spite of all the world. I therefore barred and bolted the hall-door, and gave the keys of the *souteraine* to my faithful old butler who kept "watch and ward," and admitted no one that he did not reconnoitre and cross-question. Thus fortified, I staid within doors for months together, finishing within that time some task-work, for which I was liberally paid. But this pleasant and profitable arrangement had one awkward consequence, namely, that a number of different writs of execution collected and crowded together, and when, after divers vain attempts, a bailiff did obtain ingress (by means of a large hamper duly ticketed and borne by two porters), my detention from home was longer than usual. Moreover, I felt it much more painfully than usual, be-

cause during my involuntary absence, my family were threatened by one creditor (a wealthy and amiable lady) with a final break up and smash.

Stratagems, of course, are quite fair in time of war; to which it may be added, that outrages, of whatever kind, are regarded by some people as very pardonable, there is always a plea in mitigation for such, if committed against the defenceless and the poor. For example, my family having guarded the gates of their castle very carefully during the week, did unluckily think that they might be allowed to attend divine service, and pass through the hall-door *upon Sunday*, and they did so. Even my old servant fancied he might relax his guard at that time. On their return from church one fine morning, how great was their amazement on perceiving that during their short absence, the walls and windows of the house had been crowded with placards for a sale, within a few days, of lease, furniture, books, and all other effects! Having obtained admission, they found their apartments occupied by strangers, busied in making an inventory of goods and chattels; and in answer to their angry remonstrances were kindly and considerately informed that if they ventured to offer any obstruction to such proceedings, the room-doors would be locked against them.

Now all this appeared to them and me quite outrageous, for at that time I was but a mere tyro in such matters.—A mortgage existed, but it was not legally foreclosed. The intruders were on the premises contrary to good faith, without any legal warrant, consequently were trespassers, and as such,

liable to be turned out by the proprietor *vi et armis*. Besides, their intrusion taking place as it did upon Sunday morning was an outrage of another kind, which ought to be "put down" and resisted. But the unfortunate proprietor could not appear; he was in the degraded situation of an imprisoned debtor; consequently the process of legal ejectment might be abridged *per saltum;* it was not wanted here. Never mind the question of legality. The proprietor might hereafter bring an action for damages it was true, and let him do so if he could ever find means. Who cared for that?

To a poor shadowy tyro all this appeared the very essence of wildness and wickedness. The Shadow was, of course, quite incompetent to understand the beauties of our social system, according to which any sort of game, however irregular, is fair, if played off against the poor and unprotected. The man goes to prison, the family are left defenceless, and as he cannot help them, then is your time to deprive them of all property, and turn them into the streets. But there was one legal point on which our Sunday visitors had not reckoned. The very next day happened to be the first of Trinity Term, when, according to practice at that epoch, any prisoner who had credit with the head-jailer could obtain what was most facetiously called a paper horse, and be allowed his liberty to go where he liked from nine in the morning till ten at night. On the Sunday afternoon my wife came in much agitation to seek for advice. She found me as usual in that vaulted room which had once been Haydon's, and where the walls bore divers

of his autograph inscriptions, recording the bitterness of his feelings. It was among the darkest and gloomiest in the prison, and is associated in my mind with an attack at another time of illness, brought on by protracted mental anxiety, from the effects of which I never quite recovered.

I had no advice to give, except to await with patience the result of my intended personal exertions. Next morning I was at home before ten o'clock; and afterwards the entire day elapsed in zealous negotiations to effect an amicable arrangement, so as to avoid the otherwise impending necessity for a disturbance and breach of the peace, but all my exertions were in vain.—Not till eight o'clock in the evening did my useless efforts for that purpose conclude, and at nine, with the sanction and personal assistance of my solicitor, Mr. Henry Morton, the two trespassers, who had been left as possession men, yelling and struggling, were turned out of doors. Amazed at this treatment, one of them forthwith ran away to acquaint his employers of the mishap. The other continued to howl and shout, till he collected a mob which nearly filled the whole square.

Surely it will be admitted that this was rather inconvenient for a lover of peace and order, more especially, too, for one who durst not remain quietly on the premises which he had thus defended, but must leave his family to their fate, and return forthwith to those gloomy walls more than four miles distant, which, "*according to law*," were then his only *pied à terre* and home. There was not a moment to lose. Our worthy Marshall of the King's Bench,

never forgave a prisoner who staid one minute beyond his allotted time. Accordingly, I marched out, having previously sent my old servant for a hackney-coach. No sooner did I appear, than the enraged possession-man yelled out, "there he comes—that's the villain that assaulted and half-murdered me in the exercise of my duty. Help, help! Police, police!" But as it often happens on such occasions, no policeman was within view or hearing. The mob closed in upon us, and insisted on knowing what really was the matter. In my loudest voice I replied that I had turned out this man as a trespasser, but had offered him no violence. He now roars for the police; let him go with me to the station-house, and lodge his complaint; I shall answer him there." The mob approved; my servant arrived with the coach, and my assailant growlingly gave me the honour of his company. In three minutes, we were at the Marylebone station-house; but, as I had expected, the audience was short, for the inspector, to whom I tendered my card, dismissed the case immediately as one in which he had no jurisdiction.

The infatuated hireling was enraged *de novo*, and swore he would have law and justice. "In with you, then," was my answer; "let us try another hearing in Marlborough-street." He acquiesced, but my coachman thoroughly knew his duty; he drove at the top of his speed, until on the middle of Westminster-bridge, my companion took alarm and wished to be released. "No," said I, "you are in for it now. My coachman shall not stop, but you may leap out if you dare." He yelled and shouted at intervals, till

we arrived within the court-yard of the prison, precisely as the clock began to strike ten. "Better late than never!" said the watchman at the gate. "We had given you up for lost, this time." In few words I explained the cause of my detention, whereupon he instantly seized my unfortunate companion by the collar, and hurled him with such violence against the court-wall, that I felt alarmed in my turn for the consequences, and little expected to find the man, as I did, at his post on the following day.

The disturbance caused by the mob was but a trifle compared with what ensued, when towards midnight the mortgagee and her attorneys arrived on the field to claim re-admission, endeavouring in vain to effect it by a long sustained cannonade of knocking at the door, which roused and terrified all the inhabitants of the square, and much injured one of my family, who then lay sick of a nervous fever. Next morning, instead of going directly home, I betook myself to the Police Office in High Street, Marylebone, and laid my case before the magistrates, requesting their special interference to prevent continued riots and disturbances, which would inevitably result if my family were not legally protected. After some demur and cross-questioning, my request was found reasonable, and it was arranged that I should be accompanied home by Mr. Dutch, an experienced and confidential inspector, who would investigate, and report to them on the matter. In the course of our short walk, this worthy man, thoroughly comprehending my explanations, became a stedfast ally and partizan. The enemy, as I had surmised, were

at their post on the threshold, including my hapless *compagnon de voyage* of the preceding night. Finding that my tormentors were not able to produce either landlord's or Sheriff's warrant, or indeed any warrant whatsoever for entering the premises, which assuredly were not their property, the inspector treated them with supreme contempt, and being a man of burly bulk and great strength, shoved them from the door like pigmies. The result of this interference by the police, was an order on the part of the mortgagee, that the so-styled property men should no longer attempt to gain admittance, but in lieu thereof should remain by night and by day stationed on camp-stools before the door; and this the poor hirelings actually did for three months afterwards, to the utter amazement of the neighbourhood, who, however, were led to believe that the house was tenanted by a desperado who set law and justice at defiance! At the end of that period, when the weather became cold, another attempt was made, six men entering by strategy with a new set of placards. I was at home then, and in the course of the same day, I brought in twelve sturdy and determined auxiliaries, who soon demonstrated to the others that a battle would be a hazardous experiment. On that occasion also, the uproar terminated in my favour, for I acted by good advice, and on strictly legal grounds. In other respects also I gained my point at last, for by degrees, the debt which ostensibly formed the basis for this protracted *fracas*, this tempest in a tea-pot, was entirely paid off, together with enormous costs. It is almost needless to add, that for the attorneys this was a most profit-

able case, and that the mortgagee found and acknowledged her errors when it was too late. We were good friends subsequently.

By this trifling anecdote, only one among a long series which I might adduce, the reader will judge how charmingly I succeeded in my purpose of securing a "tranquil home;" also how fitting and congenial was such a mode of life for a recluse author who desired to fix his attention wholly on a world of his own creation—to occupy himself from morning to night in consecutive study. Perhaps, also, the reader may take into account how salutary and soothing it was under these circumstances to be represented on all sides as the peace-breaker of the neighbourhood,—the contumacious rebel against our excellent laws,—the Sybarite who, in spite of all obstacles, would have his bed of roses, his turtle, champagne, and his curricle (*à la Haydon*), with "spanking greys." (I wonder my kind annalist forgot the "jelly-springs.")

Yet I must not forget to mention, that during this warfare I had some very stedfast friends. Those, indeed, were stedfast, and continued to be so, who gave themselves the trouble of inquiring into the truth. Among the few surviving friends of that time, on whom I can reckon at the present hour, I am proud to name, in the first place, Mr. Thomas Roscoe. No force of obloquy, no property men on camp-stools at our door, no number of warrants for my committal to prison, interfered for one hour with his kind visits, or prevented his co-operation. He never discovered the rose-leaves or champagne; he witnessed only the struggles of an unfortunate Shadow, who would fer-

vently have given up all his remaining strength and time to literary occupation, if only he could have obtained permission to do so; and he was witness how obdurately that permission was refused. How many times have I owed the lives of my wife and children to this unalterable friend's benevolent intervention! And how ceaseless and unwearied has been that benevolence during a period of twenty-three years!

In regard to the pursuits which brought me to London, truly, my immediate collaborators were few in number; and, from one of them alone, namely—Dr. Bowring, did I obtain any efficient and persevering co-operation. He was not deterred or shaken, any more than Mr. Roscoe, by the venom of evil tongues; nor did he abate the number of his friendly visits, because the fare, when we met convivially, was not always such as a gastronome would have selected. But in regard to cosmopolite views, or the cultivation of foreign literature in England, too surely the number of partizans, that could then be mustered, was woefully small; and I doubt much whether a recruiting process in the same cause would be very successful now. I pertinaciously maintained, that the intellectual productions of other countries, of Germany in particular, were far superior to our own; but, alas! I seemed to have nearly the whole world of England against me; and, like Sir John Leslie, for his lunar investigations, I needed the help of rich collaborators, in order to an attempt at the demonstration of my proposition. Even the weekly literary journals of Germany, were denied me, as being too

expensive: but, why murmur at this, seeing that a life, such as mine, allowed me no time to read—far less to elaborate my *Vindiciæ Germanicæ*. A batch of essays, each headed by the name of some foreign publication, was brought out quarterly:—this was all.

Among near neighbours, the kindest and most determined of partizans, in my behalf, was Sir James Mackintosh. At our first interview, he said, too truly, that his life "hung by a slender, and almost out-worn, thread;" he had been gradually necessitated to retire from the fatigues of public life; his daily solace was in the continuation of his literary tasks, which advanced slowly but unremittingly. But, though thus retired, his clearness of intellect, and energy of will, remained unabated. Having had his share of life's vicissitudes, and, like Edmund Burke, fought his way up-hill in the world, he had reason to say, "*haud ignaro malis;*" but he had never, in consequence, adopted the practical conclusion—*à la mode Anglaise*—"every one for himself *alone*." On the contrary, he retained, in advanced age, the same warmth of heart and generosity, which had characterized his early years. Rising, as he had done, from the rank of a proletarian author to that of a judge and a privy counsellor, it might have been expected that he would, at last, become "a man of the world;" but though he had long moved *in* it—he was not *of* it; he remained unalterable; the freshness of his individual character remained untarnished. It might have been expected, too, that, considering his declining strength and numerous engagements, he

could have no room left in his mind for the fates and fortunes of a poor supernumerary Shadow;—but would rather hold such at a convenient distance, and close his doors against them. He acted, however, very differently.

Once more, I deeply regret being obliged to write in haste, and under many distractions, for I should have wished to dwell on every interview with which I was honoured by this truly sincere and deeply respected friend. Short, indeed, was the time allotted for such intercourse, but the remembrance of it is deepened in my mind by associations which it would require a long chapter to express, and at present I can scarcely write one coherent page. After the death of Lady Mackintosh, (which occurred abroad in 1830,) Sir James came to reside in Cumberland-place, where I first knew him; he moved from thence to Langham-place, where in May, 1832, he died. Within that brief epoch, we had many meetings each by his own appointment, at a time of the day that least interfered with his regular employments. It was one of his peculiar and distinguishing traits to dwell affectionately on impressions and events of his early life. Long ago he had been on terms of friendly intimacy with two of my nearest relations, and on this ground received my visits in a manner more akin to the cordiality of old acquaintance, than to the mere condescension of a public character in behalf of an unfortunate author. He was not contented with my own summary statements of hardships and annoyances. He put questions in detail; he desired conferences with my legal advisers, and the result was that by his kind influence

I found means to bear up against troubles that would otherwise have been overwhelming.

Notwithstanding his expressions respecting the frail tenure of his own existence, there was on those occasions no betrayal of declining spirit or energy. On the contrary, he spoke with that animation (and on interesting subjects) with that fervour for which through life he was especially remarkable. I have insisted often on the truth that frankness and simplicity of manner are prevailing characteristics of pre-eminent minds. I have learned at last to look upon these as a kind of test or touchstone, and I cannot remember any instance in which these distinguishing traits were more forcibly developed than in that of Sir James Mackintosh. Least of all men could he fall under the imputation of being upon any subject prejudiced or one-sided. Nor would he ever, *à la mode de Londres*, arrive at a conclusion *per saltum*. With exemplary patience, and dialectic acuteness, he endeavoured to sift every question in its various bearings, after which, his decisions, when once formed, remained unalterable; the babble of a hundred tongues successively would not shake nor discompose him. In order to change those decisions, the only method would have been to analyse, decompose, and upset every premiss which he had before examined and adopted, and for this purpose, with characteristic equity, he would give his opponents a fair chance. They were welcome to convict him of errors, if rationally it were practicable to do so.

There are other tests of character in which the bitter experiences of Shadowism have led me to con-

fide; but, perhaps, they are merely *truisms*, and, therefore, undeserving of record. For example, I believe that the virtue of charity (properly so called), exists or is found wanting, very accurately in proportion to degrees of intellectual power. *Un homme borné*, may no doubt squander money, may fling it about right and left; nevertheless, *il est toujours borné*, and is incapable of consistent benevolence. Again, a man of limited capacity, who begs the question, who jumps at conclusions, or trusts to the dictum of his last babbling visitor, is invariably selfish and infallibly treacherous. You bring him to a decision, but it is no better than words written in drift-sand. You reckon, perhaps, on his friendship—you rely at least on his adherence to his own dicta; but as he gave himself little or no trouble respecting premisses, he kicks aside his conclusion without ceremony. You leave him determined, as you suppose, to move on a straightforward path, but within another day or another hour the wind changes, he catches a new scent which accords better with his humour; and, if you meet again, it is to find him hunting and doubling about on some new track: probably the very opposite of that which he had promised to follow. How many of this class are there in our enlightened world!—Their "name is Legion," and of how very few can it be said, as of Mackintosh, that he was not only a kind-hearted and generous, but also *stedfast* friend!

CHAPTER XV.

PROLONGED TROUBLES. — RICHTER'S FAILURE. — AGAIN HOMELESS. —MR. WENTWORTH BEAUMONT.—VARIOUS MIGRATIONS.—EFFORTS TO PROCURE THE ABOLITION OF THE LAW OF ARREST FOR DEBT.

I MUST wind up these memoirs. The anxieties and vicissitudes of six years, namely, from 1827 to 1834, no doubt had their importance in the estimation of a poor Shadow, but would have little or none in that of any *respectable* reader, and, therefore, need not be recorded.

In 1833 and 1834, it seemed as if my own personal embarrassments had at length been surmounted. The amount of my debt (exclusive of that to friends), had never risen in London to so much as 1000*l.*; and in 1833 the sum was reduced to a very trifling remnant. So the "tempest in a teapot" came gradually to a lull. I passed over one entire year without being arrested; but in 1834 a new source of anxiety began, namely, family illness, on account of which and according to the advice and injunctions of several medical men, I found it necessary to remove from London to Brighton. In pecuniary respects also, a new source of anxiety opened. The house of Treuttel and Würtz, Treuttel, jun. and Richter, publishers of the "Foreign Quarterly Review," (which by this time had become profitable), had dissolved partnership. Mr.

Richter was left to conduct the London business alone, as indeed he had always done; but two influential names being withdrawn from the firm, his credit became shaken, and he soon found himself beset with difficulties. In his own estimation, these were only temporary; and I believe, up to this hour, that if the promises of pecuniary support which he received from the late Mr. Raphael and others, had been realized in time, he might have maintained his ground. Meanwhile he endeavoured to do so by means of promissory notes, discounted in many instances at an exorbitant rate of interest; and these I had indorsed, at his request, to a large amount.

Towards the end of October that year, the house of Richter and Company became unable to meet their engagements—in fact stopped payment. My connection with them was well known. Within a week after that event, one of his creditors, to whom at the moment I owed only ten pounds of interest on a mortgage, profited by my absence to enter my house and take possession of all its contents. I came to town from Brighton, and remonstrated, but in vain. He flourished against me the unpaid bills of the insolvent firm, with my indorsation, and inquired how he was to provide against such an enormous loss? Two other executions followed. The house was broken up and ransacked; the grates were torn out of the chimneys; almost the walls were pulled down. Books and manuscripts having been purposely excluded from the mortgage, became nevertheless a bone of contention among these conflicting claimants. In my absence there was a battle about them which once

more alarmed the whole square. Bailiffs fought like demons, tearing the books and flinging them at one another's heads, trampling on them, and each party endeavouring to get them heaved and shovelled into their carts like brickbats. Amongst the ruins afterwards, the Life of Z. Werner, the poet, was discovered in the coal-cellar. The only copy in existence of the second part of my "Winter Night's Dream" had been left in a back parlour, where the last vestige of it was in the fragment of a *fidibus* which had been used by a possession man. Such were the closing scenes in a house to which I had so long cleaved, and which for more than six years I had regarded as my home! During the process of breaking up, I could only visit the premises on a Sunday, well knowing that at any other time I should be liable to arrest.

Naturally I wished to return to Brighton, and consult with my family what was best to be done or tried under this new disaster. But, alas, *that* became impracticable, for two protested bills of the insolvent firm had already followed me thither, and were in the hands of a sheriff's officer, who kept strict watch for my arrival. I found myself inevitably dissevered from my family, who were left in want and unprotected. London, at that season, was almost utterly deserted, and I had no resource. At length, through the intervention of Mr. L******, I did obtain from an old and intimate friend the sum of 35*l.*, for the purpose of removing my family from Brighton to London, which was accordingly done. I met them at Reigate, where we passed one quiet night. On coming into London, being homeless, we were at first

obliged to take refuge in a hotel, then as weekly tenants in a lodging-house, which, on account of the great expense, proved intolerable. About Christmas time I accepted an offer made to me by a fellow-countryman of a cottage and garden at St. John's Wood, hoping to shut myself up there, and by devoting attention to literary employment alone, keep the wolf from the door. I was the more encouraged in this hope, because my relations, Lord Gillies and Dr. Gillies agreed that I should henceforth receive from them 150*l.* per annum. I was advised also to seek subscribers for a reprint, with improvements and additions, of my various translations from German and Danish, but though subscriptions to some little extent were paid in advance, I could not master funds enough to defray the expense of printing; besides, I was at that time utterly without books, and so could not have carried through the work. My life was one of depression and anxiety, as I never went beyond the garden gates, without being in danger of arrest by Mr. Ritcher's creditors or my own. I subsided into the occupation of a scrap-writer, which in those days was still profitable; produced divers stories, criticisms, and miscellaneous essays, for periodical works, and wrote my recollections of Sir Walter Scott.

But our landlord fell into difficulties, and required a high rent, which I could not pay. It became a very hard battle to live, and to mend matters, about Christmas-day, 1835, I was arrested for a balance still due to one of my old creditors, with whom alone it might have been possible to treat, but by this act I was brought under the immediate power of a claim-

ant on the bankrupt estate of Richter and Co., a man with whom I never had any direct dealings, and from whom I never received one sixpence. He remained inexorable. The new year, 1836, dawned for me in the Sheriff's prison — the worst, as I believe, in Europe. I remained there for three months, and just as my preparations were concluded to take the benefit of the Insolvents' Act, my detaining creditors did recover as much of common sense as to perceive that the law of arrest was in no wise beneficial to their interest, and all of them accepted the same terms of compromise which I had, in vain, proffered three months before.

Upon that occasion the various law-costs and other expenses, incidental to my confinement were, as usual, enormous, nearly doubling the debt, and thus interposing an insurmountable bar, which rendered any diminution of the original claims impossible. My relations very firmly declared that they would pay the charges, be what they might, of effecting an insolvency release, but not one penny in reducing the claims of creditors. I could not have surmounted the difficulty had it not been for two most unexpected events, first, a visit in prison from a most sincere friend, who offered to give his personal security in one quarter for 30*l.*, and secondly, inquiries made at that time by Mr. Wentworth Beaumont, for a German translator who could also write good English. My pretensions in that respect, and present situation, being made known to him, he instantly sent the sum still required to purchase liberty (namely 20*l.*)

On the second day after my return home, occurred

my first interview with Mr. Beaumont, one of the most humane and kind-hearted of men; subjected to many provocations, but all insufficient to neutralize the benevolence of disposition and amenity of manner, which were to him natural. At that first meeting, I received the materials for my allotted task, namely, a MS. written in German characters, which, when translated, was intended as an article for the "British and Foreign Review." With characteristic mindfulness, Mr. Beaumont added a further sum, wherewith "to buy pens, ink, and paper;" besides, as he remarked, "a man coming out of prison penniless, is not in a proper plight to enjoy his liberty."

By many people, this event might have been regarded as pre-eminently fortunate, and in one respect it certainly was so, as the friendly relation which accident led me to form with Mr. Beaumont, remained unbroken from that date to the close of his life. But the pecuniary transactions betwixt us were very limited. Mr. Beaumont had just then become proprietor and manager of the "British and Foreign Review," and had it been known that in my literary capacity, however humble, and as connected with this work, I had ready access to the wealthiest commoner in England, assuredly there would have been an immediate and general *onslaught* of all my creditors including those of Messrs. Richter and Co., who held their bills with my indorsation. It was, therefore, clear enough, that unless Mr. Beaumont chose to pay them off entirely, my acquaintance with him, if noticed, would soon have brought me back into a situation even worse than that in which I had been found.

Accordingly, I never spoke with him on that matter at all, but at our various meetings, the conversation was restricted to the topics which he proposed for discussion in the "British and Foreign Review." I did what was allotted me to do, and no more. Mr. Beaumont had formed hopes that he would have roused the "slumbering lion of literary talent in Young England;" but I fear that instead of the lion's roar, he was answered too often by very different voices; and as an M.P. and landowner to a vast extent, he had at that time too many other objects crowding on his attention to be able to devote himself to literature alone. The poor man is liable to perpetual distractions and interruptions, so that his attempts at consecutive study become in vain. Perhaps the next worse case is that of the millionaire, who is equally liable to distractions and interruptions, though it is true they are in his case of a very different kind, and if he thinks proper, he may, by one effort of resolution, repel them for ever, and devote his life to literature, science, and art.

After two years' acquaintance, the trees in our once peaceful garden at St. John's Wood seemed almost to become blighted under the influence of anxiety. I wished to leave London altogether; but as it was no longer possible for us to undertake any long journey, I migrated only as far as to Champion Grove, above Camberwell, where we rented a furnished cottage for a short time towards the end of autumn. Being utterly a stranger in the neighbourhood, I felt myself for that little while as much disunited from the world of Lon-

don as if we had travelled away one hundred miles into the country. As much as possible I tried to avoid ever entering the town. Our walks, in fine weather, were towards Sydenham, which was then secluded and quiet, to hear the tinkle of the sheep-bells, and watch the tints of the autumnal sun from the heights at Norwood. In that solitude, accordingly, my time became once more of some value. Within one month I wrote papers for Mr. Beaumont's Review, and for Frazer's Magazine, which were afterwards much approved, and brought 50*l.* of remuneration. Up to the present hour it is my firm belief that with the same degree of quiet which I enjoyed for a brief interval at Champion Hill, I could very easily have earned the same amount or more *every month* after we left Scotland; in other words, my gains during ten years (spent by compulsion in degrading and useless worry,) might have amounted to 6000*l.* I well know that my disposition to labour had never abated; that I would have worked sedulously, had it been possible to live in peace, or keep wolves from the door till my work was done. But, alas! for want of a little capital, say 600*l.* *at commencement* in London, I became inevitably involved, and lost my fair chance for 600*l.* a year.

Champion Hill was to me like an oasis in the desert. I have never ceased to remember our cottage there with a feeling of affection—it was so retired, so tranquil; there was, moreover, an old oak tree in our own garden, which I regarded with especial interest. But the family to whom it belonged returned in November, claiming their habitation, which we of course

abandoned. Cherishing still my old day-dreams of a country life and quiet home, I would not return into London, but took at haphazard another cottage at Peckham Rye, near Forest Hill, where we spent the next winter. There, also, my time might have turned to good account, if I had been allowed to follow out any one train of thought; but these repeated changes unavoidably increased our expenditure, and disordered my poor financial arrangements, thus again giving rise to cares which forced me to leave my writing table and fireside to seek for help in town. By these perplexities I was also led into accepting the proffered employment of writing "leaders" for a weekly newspaper, which I did for five months, not without much disgust, inasmuch as the remuneration by no means compensated for my time and trouble, especially for attendances which I gave at the printing-office in town.

In the month of March, 1837, we were again obliged to migrate, our lease being expired; and having found that my unavoidable visits to town were too expensive, to admit of sojourning in the country, I took refuge—first, at Brompton; and, afterwards, at Queen's Elm, Chelsea, where, in May, 1837, I was unexpectedly arrested for 20*l.*, at the suit of our former landlord, at Peckham Rye; who, no doubt, believed that he thereby did a vastly wise and proper thing; for I had told him the money would be ready about that time, (*as it really was*), and he perhaps wished to make assurance doubly sure. But, instead of planting himself in the favourable position which he had expected, he thereby

brought me once more into the custody of one of Mr. Richter's creditors, who proved completely immitigable; also, of three others, whose united claims made a formidable amount—all of which must be cleared away before I could have a moment's leisure to satisfy the demand of my worthy and sagacious landlord.

Thus, I was again completely dissevered from my home and family; the prison walls, and five long miles of road, being interposed betwixt them and me. It is maintained, that a repetition of the same trials must blunt the feelings of the sufferer, one of those eccentric propositions which I think are peculiar to England; but, on the contrary, I felt the infliction at this time more keenly, *if possible*, than on any former occasion. I had become thoroughly tired of such a *mauvaise plaisanterie*, and more than ever became convinced that such proceedings were not merely wild and senseless, but illegal and unjust, and, as such, ought to be put down and resisted. Mr. Richter had been protected by the Bankruptcy Court, although his debts amounted to 14,000*l.*, and the assets were extremely meagre; on my own account, I owed only a few hundreds, yet could not claim any such protection. Why was the law thus one-sided? Why was there a halo of innocence shed round the brows of a "dealer and chapman;" whilst the poor author must beg for that fair hearing in Court, which ought, in justice, to be accorded without solicitation, even to the worst of criminals? I remember, with gratitude, the kindness, at this time, of Mr. Wentworth Beaumont, and of Mr. J. M. Kemble,

editor of the British and Foreign Review; both of whom thought that, in my case, to claim the benefit of the Insolvency laws was an act of duty; as it was impossible otherwise to see an end to the troubles in which I was involved.

But I did otherwise. I determined at last, that as the so-called law of arrest had once more placed me in custody "ad satisfaciendum," I would bring my family thither also, establish my home within the prison "rules," and according to existing practice of the King's Bench, remain there for the satisfaction of creditors and my own. In those days if the debtor were once in confinement, the creditor was bound to be therewith contented, and the former had only to keep within his allotted boundaries, and go on to the end of his life without further molestation.

The blossoms on the orchards at Queen's Elm had long since faded away; the balmy zephyrs of May had come and gone; June had elapsed in all its beauty and splendour, but except for a few days during the brief interval of Trinity Term, I remained fixed within prison walls. Truly there was needed some extraordinary motive for this unwonted submissiveness on my part, and the motive which did exist was not of a merely selfish and personal character. I had just before my imprisonment received 36*l.* from Mr. Kemble, for an article on Debtor and Creditor law, of which the parentage on its appearance in the "British and Foreign Review" was ascribed to a high legal authority. It contained some irrefragable and important truths which *told* with the public, and I came into confinement this time with my mind more

than ever full of the subject. I had not been long within the gloomy precincts of the Queen's Bench, ere by accident I became acquainted with a fellow-sufferer, whom I have already mentioned, namely, Mr. Halls, ex-magistrate of Bow-street, to whom as a barrister I respectfully appealed for his opinion on the question, "legality or illegality of imprisonment for debt?" To my agreeable surprise I found that Mr. Halls was already well prepared on the points which I most wished to investigate and establish. Even at our first meeting we agreed on these as a basis for proceedings, respecting which we afterwards invited and challenged contradiction. At all events I had now found a colleague and collaborator, whereas before I had moved alone, and I resolved that I would make the most of my time in prison for one exclusive purpose, that of labouring indefatigably to promulgate the truth, in regard to the origin and effects of a system by which so many victims had unjustly suffered, so many rogues been encouraged and upheld, and by which so many families had been rendered hopeless and destitute.

In the month of July, having found the needful securities for the marshal, (an easy matter, seeing that the aggregate of debt was within 250*l.*), I emerged into the crowded liberty of the rules, where, with much trouble, I obtained rooms for the reception of my family. The worst of life in this quarter was the want of room to live, without acquiescing in payment of an exorbitant rent. It was next to impossible to find furnished apartments sufficient to contain a family. It was a district crowded by petty

shopkeepers and tradesmen, in which there were then few lodgings to let, and those, in the case of prisoners, always extravagantly dear, owing to the prudent reflection that such unfortunate persons could not go elsewhere to find a cheaper asylum. But for this objection, the situation would have appeared to me a haven of rest. I had once more the command of my own time, and I devoted it unceasingly towards the accomplishment of the purpose already mentioned, in which I was assisted by the advice of Mr. Halls, whom I visited daily. We printed and circulated a series of pamphlets; but out of sight, the best of our productions was the argumentative petition already mentioned, which was presented in the House of Lords by the Marquis of Lansdowne, February, 1838.

When term began, and I could go where I pleased, my visits were principally to barristers in the Temple, and other inns of court, in order that the legal validity of our arguments might be contested, and thereby established. I heartily wished to apply the principle of contradiction, and a long chapter might be made out of the ridiculous scenes which occurred when I went upon this quest. I met with astute counsellors no doubt,—good *practical* men,—who held high rank at the bar, and whose leading principle was to gain their points in court, no matter *how*, if only gained; but who, when taken unawares on a question requiring a knowledge of constitutional law, were no better prepared than if they had been infants. It was like questioning a student of Paley on the truths of transcendentalism. And how humorous

was the fear among some of these worthies, lest they should commit themselves; and, yet, what blunders they nevertheless did make. By Lord Tenterden's Uniformity of Process Act, had been utterly and for ever annulled all those "elegant fictions," whereby, alone, the courts at Westminster could, with a semblance of law, sanction imprisonment in cases of debt. No longer could it be supposed *nunc pro tunc*, that a "King's original" had issued from Chancery in a so-called criminal case of trespass, when, in reality, a debt alone was in question; for, by the act above mentioned, such machinery was prohibited, abrogated, and annulled. And yet, most assuredly, no act had ever passed by which the courts of Westminster acquired any new jurisdiction. The dilemma consequently was inevitable. *Where*, then, was to be found *the* statute, by virtue of which the said courts could now make the writ of *capias* applicable in cases of debt?

To this question, how many times did I receive rash answers pointing to this or that regulative statute of modern date, which of course I rejected as perfectly inapplicable and useless! With rigid pertinacity, my sapient advisers were brought back to one distinct question, which they were forced to leave unanswered, because to the best of my information up to the present hour, it is unanswerable. My favourite plan was to draw up a case in conformity with the arguments used in the petition, and to take it, with an ample fee, to two of our most eminent counsel, with the proviso openly declared, that upon accepting the fee, they were expected to sift the question in all

its bearings, also that their opinions when obtained, would be published. But for such goings-on, a round sum would have been indispensably requisite; and in those days, it had already become far more easy to raise 1000*l.* (or a far larger sum) for the most impracticable and absurd plan of a railway, than it was to obtain only 100*l.* for the promotion of a rational and beneficent purpose. Mr. Beaumont proved his good-will by contributing 10*l.*, but no one else in all England could be found to follow his example; in short, our movements were crippled, and our views frustrated for want of sufficient pecuniary means.

In the year 1840, it seemed to every one (excepting Mr. Halls and myself) as if our farther efforts would be superseded, seeing that a committee was appointed by government to inquire once more into the state of debtor and creditor law, especially with a view to the question, whether imprisonment for debt was or was not an evil of such magnitude, attended by so little benefit, that as such it ought to be abolished for ever. This committee was formed of the most independent and experienced city merchants and bankers, also of commissioners in the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Courts, and other legal authorities. Their investigations were conducted with great patience and fidelity, and the result thereof came out in a ponderous folio about the month of October that year. I was then residing in France, but from the *Times* Newspaper I learned, that after protracted examination, the committee decided that the evils of the arresting system were enormous, its advantages

illusory or infinitesimal, and consequently it ought to be abolished *in toto*. Among the members of that numerous committee, as I am advised, there was one solitary dissentient voice, namely that of Mr. Commissioner Law of the Insolvency Court, who thereby acquired for himself a distinction precisely similar to that of Mr. Serjeant Stephen, who alone dissented from the decision of the committee long before appointed by the House of Commons to inquire into the same subject. After six years' labour, if I remember right, that committee in their final report published in 1831, recommended the utter abolition of arrest for debt, and Mr. Stephen being the only malcontent, thought it necessary to publish his reasons in the shape of a letter thereto appended. I have been told that the same course was adopted by the learned commissioner of the Insolvency Court, but if his honour's reasons were no better than those assigned by his precursor, Mr. Serjeant Stephen, truly they could not do much credit to his logical acumen.

Before quitting this topic, I may observe that on the motion of Lord Campbell, the system of imprisonment without crime was twice abolished by the House of Commons, upon which occasions, also, there was one solitary dissentient voice, namely, that of Mr. Richards, then member for Knaresborough—in his own estimation, no doubt an acute reasoner—who at the second or third reading, finding himself awkwardly enough "in a minority of one," wound up in memorable manner by voting against his own motion!

Lastly, on the motion of Lord Cottenham, the sys-

tem was all but abolished for ever by the House of Peers in 1844, his lordship's bill for that purpose being approved by Lord Lyndhurst, and powerfully supported by Lords Denman, Campbell, and others. On that occasion, too, there was but one dissentient voice, namely, that of my Lord Brougham and Vaux. Lord Cottenham's Bill, as I have said, was approved; it had, if I remember right, gone through the second reading, and, with the Chancellor's approval was on the direct road to revisal in Committee, and to become the law of the land. But even at that advanced stage of the matter, Lord Brougham suddenly interfered, moving that Lord Cottenham's bill should be shelved in order to make room for one of his own devising, framed, as he averred, upon a careful examination and digest of all the various debtor and creditors laws then existing upon earth!

CHAPTER XVI.

REMOVAL TO BOULOGNE.—INDISCREET INDULGENCE IN A LONG LITERARY WORK.—LIFE IN THE COUNTRY.—DIVERS SONNETS.

Towards the close of 1838, I removed from Lambeth-road to Burton-street, Burton Crescent, where once more I resolved to contend for the possession of a quiet home. Accordingly, I did remain there for more than eighteen months without much molestation, though not without daily anxieties. I planned divers long works, which it only needed time and patience to realize, and contributed papers to the "British and Foreign Review," and other journals. Yet during that time, I never for a moment lost sight of my cherished purpose of legal reform, in which my respected friend Mr. Halls (though then in bad health and with broken spirits) continued to participate. I still hoped that I should one day be enabled to apply £100 for the rational purpose of obtaining the opinions of two leading barristers on the legal question, and publishing their opinions when obtained. But Mr. Beaumont had gone to reside in Italy, his health began to decline, and we had no *monied* ally.

Once more, as above said, I cleaved to the notion of a quiet home. Behind our house in Burton-street were fine old trees in a garden or pleasure-ground, attached to the town residence of that enterprising

littérateur, the late Mr. James Perry. Looking on them, I could imagine that I was far away from London; an impression which deepened my desire to remain there immoveably. But in 1840, owing to family illness, a change of air was again prescribed by medical men. I argued against it for many weeks, but was over-ruled. At last, on the suggestion of my kind friend Dr. Maginn, I went *en famille* on board a Boulogne steamboat, intending to remain only a month or six weeks abroad, consequently retained my house, leaving books and papers unarranged to the care of servants, with a promise of speedy return.

My outset in France was one of poverty, or the narrowest possible means. Our stipulated income was reduced to £130 per annum, and the migration could not have taken place but for a very small legacy left to my wife in her own exclusive right, which was then deposited in the hands of the bankers, Wright and Co. But if we remained abroad, as my family seemed desirous to do, the plan of economy was very simple, for I felt confident that by keeping sedulously at work, and sending MSS. to London, I might very easily gain £130 more; and for £260 per annum it was quite practicable for us to live at Boulogne. Indeed practice in this instance promised to outstrip theory, for, profiting by tranquillity, I completed within one month a number of "Magazine Articles," which were all readily accepted, and which brought remuneration to the amount of £40. Consequently I had only to proceed at the same rate in order to make up an income of £610 per annum, more than enough for one of the richest at Boulogne.

Si sic omnia! If my plans had been restricted to

these, and been followed out with consistent perseverance, all might have been well. But "a change came o'er the spirit of the dream." In the spring of the year 1841, began most unexpectedly a series of letters proffering us aid in all possible ways, but more especially in behalf of my son. At commencement this correspondence was indirect, and attended by a certain air of mystery; in consequence of which I took the first of the letters to an old acquaintance and most sincere friend, Sir Alexander Ramsay, requesting his opinion. He thought as we all did, that the letter could not possibly have been dictated without a good motive, nor without intentions, the fulfilment of which might be relied on.

Unfortunately, we relied far too much on the prospects thus opened. Within a few weeks, the veil of mystery was withdrawn, and I received letters from a near relation corroborating the previous intimation of his kind intentions, in which, up to the present hour, I feel convinced that he was thoroughly sincere. I then believed that, after a lapse of twenty-six years, he had seen the propriety of making some *permanent* compensation to me for that break up of my paternal rooftree in 1815, to which in volume first I have already alluded. Thus, whilst in the eyes of others the contents of his letters amounted only to a friendly offer on motives of benevolence towards a near relation, I read in them somewhat more, namely, an offering at the shrine of justice.

Unfortunately, as I have just now said, we trusted too much to those letters; and instead of continuing sedulously to write such papers as would bring immediate recompense, or to finish a novel which I had on

the anvil, I rashly and wildly allowed myself to indulge in the labour of a long regular work; not because it would bring any immediate support, but because, if completed, it might deserve to live and hereafter be useful. Under circumstances like mine, I had no right to do this. Such consecutive application as this work required was an indulgence that can with propriety be permitted only to authors possessing independent income, or by monks in their lonely cells, not certainly by the proletarian who has a family dependent on his labour, and who must therefore adapt his productions to the tastes, however coarse, of the world he lives in, in order to earn means to live.

Further, my invincible wish for quiet and seclusion increased our expenditure. In May, 1841, we resided at a cheap lodging in a narrow and noisy street; but as the summer approached, I longed unspeakably to be placed in the pure air and solitude of the country. Accordingly, I took a small furnished house (Château Blancpignon), with a beautiful garden and some fine old wood, about a league out of town, where for many reasons that need not be detailed, our expenses were augmented. Whilst residing there, notwithstanding many causes for anxiety, it seemed as if the feelings, hopes, and day-dreams of early life revived. I suffered myself to forget, or rather I did not brood on the dark impressions of the preceding fifteen years, which became like the black clouds of a thunder-storm that has passed away; and sometimes I felt willing to persuade myself that I had then looked on the world through a false medium, and believed it to be worse than it was. I supposed it possible that I had provoked hostility by over frankness of speech or obstinacy of pur-

pose; moreover that possibly there did exist much of lurking good in society if patiently sought after and cultivated, and I was more than ever willing and anxious to be for the future *at peace*. But too surely the experiences of the preceding years had carried along with them all the force of truth; it was not during those years but *now* (as in early days) that I viewed the world through a false medium. Dark impressions might retire for a while like the clouds of the thunder-storm, but too surely they would come again. An interval of peace has its blessings no doubt, but the breathing time thus allowed is of little value, unless it be spent in unremitting preparations for the return of war.

In self-defence, I must say that mere promises, or prospects *alone*, would not have led me to incur additional expense, or allow myself the luxury of laborious studies to which I had no right. But in the autumn of 1841, the unexpected conduct of one of my wife's relations placed another sum exclusively at her own disposal, and this being transferred to her credit in the hands of a French banker, immediately placed us at Boulogne in a false position. Credit was proffered to me without limit. If I had wished to live at a rate of 1000*l.* per annum, I should have met with ample encouragement and approval, but I desired only economy and retirement. So much, however, was quite clear,—we had ready money in reserve at our banker's, and we had good prospects for the future, these being founded on the written promises of a friend, who we knew was incapable of deception; and under these impressions I continued to indulge in day-dreams, and to believe that I might continue my

long work without interruption; lastly, and as already said, I was willing to think that the world was not so very treacherous as hitherto I had believed it to be.

In my tranquillity at Blancpignon, were revived notions and feelings of country life, which had never died in my heart, but had been counteracted and overpowered by hostile influences ever since 1826. During the last fourteen years, with the exception of a short time at Champion Hill, I had not made acquaintance with a single tree, that was not less or more begrimed with the smoke of London. The *rus verum* was for me inaccessible; but now, I could once more watch the varying aspects of the seasons, amid scenery like that of early days.

Long-lost thoughts of *home* returned to me at Blancpignon. What mattered it to me, that the trees, the lawn, the garden and meadows belonged legally to another? They were mine by an equally valid tenure so long as I could pay landlord's rent, and they were mine by an intellectual tenure of which he could know nothing.

I once wrote a long magazine article, under the title "*What* do the English know about Boulogne?" but it remained in MS. and has long since been lost. Of numberless excursions into the country—of dinners, masqued balls, amateur theatricals, concerts and other *soirées*, of divers incidents illustrating French and English characters, I might no doubt make a lengthy record, but have no room left for it now. In order, however, to break the yarn of mere egotism, I shall make place here for a short *intermezzo* of sonnets, com-

posed or revived, during our stay in France. Many of those rhyming memoranda have been lost, and whether the few that remain are the most favourable specimens I now cannot say.

I.

ON SEEING THE HOUSE WHEREON IS INSCRIBED, "ICI EST MORT L'AUTEUR DE GIL BLAS." 26TH SEPT., 1840.

"Ici est mort Le Sage?" But *what* hath died?
I would say, what hath perish'd? *Not* Gil Blas!
He lives as heretofore; the ruthless law
Of change affects him not; he will abide,
From age to age; all countries are his own.
What then hath perish'd? That corporeal mould,
Which, like a minstrel's harp grown frail and old,
No longer could respond in wonted tone
Unto the master's touch! But did the *Mind*
That framed the melody, and woke the strings,
Or did the *Song* itself destruction find
With that old harp? Oh, vain imaginings!
The Mind and Music live (though cast aside
The broken harp). Le Sage hath never died!

II.

CALM, AFTER A STORMY NIGHT. SEPT. 17, 1840.

The sun looks forth; the landscape smiles again;
The winds that raged by night are playful now,—
Scarce wave the roan-tree on the mountain's brow,—
Or from the heath-bell shake the lingering rain.
The storm hath passed; but in its darksome train,
How much hath gone, the Fate will ne'er allow
To re-appear? How many a blooming bough
Hath yielded to the blast, that howl'd amain!

How many a jocund spirit that defied
Fierce gales till then, did in yon dreary night
Surrender to the wild and whelming tide!—
Weep not for them, but for the mourners weep,
For whom in vain now shines the morning's light;
Whose loves and hopes have perish'd in the deep!

III.

ON A VIEW OF THE ENGLISH COAST ACROSS THE CHANNEL. SEPT. 20, 1840.

And yonder cliffs are England! Through the haze
Of distance, how each well-remembered scene,
Each castle, town, and tower, each meadow green,
In youth belov'd, awakes to Memory's gaze,
With dreams of laughing groups and joyful days!
But is this all? How gladly would I screen
From sight the wasted forms that glide between,
And vainly mid those laughing groups upraise
The cries of Want, and suffering without crime,
Which crime at last engenders! On this "free"
And beauteous isle, a fierce idolatry
Hath cast a darkening shade that grows with time,
A Mammon-worship! Thus the "good old Tree"
Of England droops, that else had stood "sublime."*

IV.

SUNSHINE AND CALM AFTER A STORM. Oct. 28, 1842.

At intervals, in transient gleams like these,
Descends on earth an influence that thereto
Belongs not, when athwart the fading trees,
Thus floats the sunlight in its golden hue,
Through clouds that sleep amid the vaulted blue.
Scarce flits the gossamer in the faint breeze
That gently steals along the fragrant leas
Still twinkling, though at noon, with morning dew.

* Quercus sublimis in agro."
LUCAN, & SIR R. PEEL.

Silent is Nature *here ;* yet as of yore,
Seems it not, that a voice of other days
Admonishes from an eternal shore?
"Though transient be the gleam, on earth that plays,
There *is* a home where peace dwells evermore,
A spring that fades not,—light that ne'er decays!"

V.

On the wreck of the "Reliance." Nov. 1842.

Shipwreck?—Aye, true, the ship is wreck'd. Lo there,
Casks, coffers, bales of costly merchandize!
While from the grim waves ghastly forms arise
Of those who therein "perished." But beware!
In words conventional oft lurks a snare.
They perish'd not. The grim sea can make prize
Of dross alone; not that which never dies;
Not wreck'd are *they*. In such creed were despair!
No, they have anchor'd on th' eternal shore,
Whereto the struggling sinner's last faint pray'r
Is borne unerring mid the tempest's roar!—
Weep not for them, but rather bid prepare
For evil days, the rich and proud, whose care
Is fixed alone upon their *earthly* store.

VI.

On the decline of Autumn. Nov. 2, 1840.

With moonlike mildness, o'er the fading woods,
Now gleams th' autumnal sun. Why should it be,
That fleeting rays on yonder blighted tree
Have charms that Spring, even in her brightest moods,
Has ne'er imparted, charms whereon long broods
The poet's mind?—To slow decay we see
Yielding the Summer's pomp and pageantry,
Yet with a radiant smile her sway concludes,

A brightness drawn from Heaven. With drear decay ;
Contrasting thus, the light seems more serene ;
And as like withered flowers oft fade away
Our earthly hopes, yet, 'mid the desolate scene,
May gleams of quenchless lustre intervene;—
Light not of earth,—but of eternal day!

VII.

Written at Midnight. Nov. 1840.

A dreary hour is this. The light of day
Seems quench'd and gone ; in vain we look on high ;—
Like a grim vault appears our cloud-wrapt sky,
And like a corse, the earth without one ray
To break the gloom lies silent. Yet their way
Through heaven the stars pursue unceasingly,
And not the less, for many a gladsome eye,
The sun in splendour doth the world array !
Here night prevails, as in the rayless tomb,
Where dust to dust returns. Yet for the dead,
A light remains, that shall their world relume,
A stedfast Sun, whose glories are out-spread
In realms unknown to mortal eye or tread,
In fields where amaranth flowers eternal bloom.

VIII.

Autumnal Scenery. Sept. 25, 1840.

How beautiful is Autumn !—How serene
This mellow light, that, 'mid the forest gay,
Reveals the varying tints of slow decay !
How deep the stillness of this pastoral scene,
As if no storm again could intervene
To break the spells of silent thought that sway
Reflective hearts, and prompt the poet's lay !
Ah, never smiles on earth that golden sheen

So lovingly, as when th' autumnal day
Thus cheers the woods, wherein each leaf now bright,
Must wither soon and die. Not so the light,
Their source of beauty! Each particular ray
Hath its own life unquenchable; though given
To earth awhile, its changeless home is heaven.

IX.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF AN EXPRESSION ON THE LIFELESS FEATURES OF THOMAS CAMPBELL, JUNE 17, 1844.

"Serenity and Peace?"—Aye, peace is there—
Calmness, even joy—as when in early days,
Hope cheer'd all Nature for the poet's gaze,
As if the landscape evermore should wear
Those tints of gladness! But the dreams had pass'd.
Those earthly hopes declin'd; the world when tried,
Was not the world in early time descried;
Faded became its hues; the skies o'ercast.
Neglected hung the minstrel harp, though still,
Th' undying notes wherewith it once had rung
Were echoed far and near;—yet Age's chill
Crept o'er the strings; mute was the poet's tongue.
One hope remain'd,—a gleam that could not die—
'Tis now fulfill'd. Hence the "serenity!"

X.

A SNOW-STORM AT MIDNIGHT. FEB. 2, 1844.

Earth clad in robes of innocence! Once more
Borne on the wings of mighty winds descend
The snow-flakes, shrouding all with mantle hoar,
Yet not indeed, with earthly things to *blend!*
No, they from Heaven's blue vault do hither tend,
Numerous as are the sands on ocean's shore
In dazzling throng,—life, lustre without end:—
But on this earth, how soon their date is o'er!

'Tis but to show their purity so bright,
Their stainless beauty that they come, and then,
Ere we have duly priz'd them, from our sight
They fade, 'mid the polluted haunts of men;
Yet not to perish; no, to realms of light
They have exhaled, and heaven-ward risen again.

XI.

To Kenelm H. Digby, Esq. On his "Ages of Faith; or, Mores Catholici." 1843.

"Dark ages?" Aye, for men of modern date,
Whom Mammon-worship blinds; whose owlish gaze
Reboils from Christian light of early days,
That guides unto the straight and narrow gate!—
Such minds obscure whate'er they contemplate.
Yet not the less that quenchless light displays
Its radiance to the faithful—through the haze
Of time and distance—pure, immaculate.
Thus Faith hath guided Thee, from dusky shrines
Gems to restore, whose never-dying worth
In every age with equal lustre shines;
Lustre not born of Mammon nor of earth,
Whose home is Heaven—like sun-rays that appear
On earth—yet leave not their own pristine sphere!

XII.

On the Red-breast's song in November. 1840.

Yes, orators there are, with voices loud,
And books of magic spells, whereby we now
May waken tongues long silent in the shroud!—
But mark, from yonder faded, yellow bough,
There comes a tiny voice, whose notes to me
Bring more than books or orators can give!
It seems to speak of mutability,
And that no less which will for ever live.
It seems to say; "Aye, Nature fades again;

The leaves are sear; frost-nipped they flit away,
To perish dankly in the winter's rain;
But Hope droops not, though Nature's charms decay;—
Hope that on earth is nurtured not, but clings
To Heaven as home—still calm and cheerful—sings.

XIII.

ON READING IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, AN ELOQUENT PETITION AGAINST IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT. TEMP. JACOBI I.

From age to age, in pampered Albion's isle,
The voice of poverty and of th' oppressed
Has been upraised; but reckless all the while,
The wealthy left that grievance unredressed.
They heeded not the moan of prisoners doomed
To suffering without crime (for whom in vain
Shone vernal suns or flowering meadows bloom'd).
'Twixt rich and poor a wide gulf did remain;
And still exists the barrier. As of yore,
The powerful close their ears on that faint voice
Which dies away, and then is heard no more.—
So is it *here;* the rich man has his choice;—
But *elsewhere* will the gulf still wider be;
Th' oppress'd and poor dread not Eternity.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE ENGLISH ON THE CONTINENT.—RUS IN URBE.—INTERVALS OF QUIET.— RENEWED MISFORTUNES.—A BEDEVILED HOUSE.— THE CHATEAU D'ORDRE.—A FRIEND IN NEED.—DOMESTIC SUFFERINGS.

It is remarkable how the English character appears occasionally to change when transplanted into the air of the Continent, but the change is in appearance only, and at best is evanescent. By certain absentees, however, it would almost seem as if Mrs. Grundy had been forgotten, and her *dicta* despised; they feel themselves beyond the sphere of her jurisdiction *then*. Almost it would seem as if the precious rule "every one for himself *alone*" were flung overboard after they quaffed their first flask of *vin ordinaire*. One would think that peculiar spirit of English *cliqueism* where the club, strange to say, holds together by means of intense selfishness in every member, had died out in the purer atmosphere. One might surmise even, that Mammon-worship had fallen in their estimation. They venture to be convivial without "introductions;" they draw their purse-strings with a freedom till then impracticable; they enter into social circles, partake of amusements, hear complacently and even venture to utter sentiments (to their own wonder perhaps), at which Mrs. Grundy would hold up her hands in pious horror. If in London they ventured on such goings-on, assuredly they would incur her most serious displeasure; in

truth, she would direct all the venom of her angry tongue against them.

Practically speaking, I have known at Boulogne sojourners of high professional rank, ex-officials of leading influence and importance, who, when at home, would have been inaccessible in divers senses of the word, their movements there being limited within a certain circle, and even their intellects warped by conventional rules, which to transgress would in their estimation be fatal; men with whom social intercourse would there be useless, except to address them on the usual subjects of their daily routine practice: and yet, under the clear atmosphere of another land, these very individuals would unbend in such degree, that one might have supposed the spirit of youth, even of boyhood, had suddenly revived in them. They have condescended to hear the doctrines of Immanuel Kent in my obscure study; they have joined in my walks to the forest, have spoken by the way of their former occupations as if these made merely a page in the history of times bygone, from which they were disengaged for ever, and as if a new life had dawned for them, irrespective of all that Mrs. Grundy had ever said, done, or thought. Truly, the conventional laws of England have no force in France, Italy, or Germany; they are remembered, but that is all, and one is bound by them no more than the mariner on the wild waves by the etiquette of a drawing-room. And yet the English character, though thus changed outwardly, remained indestructible *au fonde*, and I can easily imagine that when such people returned "to town," every one of them would immediately

"Shrink into his mew,
And recollect his wonted sanctity anew."

become inaccessible as before, except to kindred *saints*, would shudder at thoughts of even a whisper in bad humour from Mrs. Grundy; would weigh and measure their own words, as if the ancient dame were omnipresent; would twist up their purse-strings into so many knots that they could not be undone; in short, would resume and exhibit all the charming peculiarities of Anglican character.

But enough of them. Whilst residing in France I commenced for the first time in my life a regular diary, for the purpose of noting whatever seemed worthy to be remembered, and on the principle that each day was the epitome of a life. Nine goodly volumes of this diary were written abroad, and I have continued the work since my return. From these ample *notanda*, I might possibly make selections not quite unworthy of preservation, but neither room nor time is left. I dare not even look into them now.

Memory dwells on that autumn at Blancpignon as a happy and tranquil time. I recollect especially the early morning hours, when I watched the sun rise over the forest, and the deep stillness and serenity of the country. I had no intention but to remain there, having taken the house for twelve months, but when the rigors of the French winter drew on, my plans in that respect were overruled. No persuasions, however, would have led me back into the crowded part of Boulogne. I selected a house within the ramparts of the old town, an old rambling house, much out of repair, having vine-covered walls and two gardens, both of which had been long neglected, and one was a mere square of black earth without remnants of shrub or flower. Owing to the immediate adjunct of the ram-

parts, where one can always have a sheltered and beautiful walk, the situation appeared to me like a *rus in urbe;* and here also, I once more took up the notion of settling as if I had been at home! It was the season for transplanting, and our gardener at Blancpignon brought me trees wherewith to adorn the neglected gardens. If the late Sir Henry Stewart of Allanton had himself been there to direct that operation, it could not have succeeded better. The transplanted trees were of good size, and all of them (two or three evergreens excepted) flourished *à merveille*, sending forth their broad leaves next spring as vigorously as if they had not endured any change. I was foolish enough to regard this as a good omen, and looked on my plantations with no little complacency. I, who had been the proprietor of nursery grounds on my own estate with thousands of trees ready to transplant every winter, and who had possessed woods in my own right of more extent than were visible from the rampart, felt nevertheless cheered by the presence of these trees, not unlike the poor prisoner who, as a *memento* of other days, keeps a pot of mignionette or wallflower at his window. But one special source of cheerfulness at Boulogne was, that within five minutes' walk, one could escape from town altogether into the free country—to green fields, to shady or sheltering walks and quiet meadows, never annoyed by high stone walls and other impassable fences, with the pleasant *annonce* of "Man-traps and spring-guns set in these grounds." So quiet was our life during the winter of 1841 and '42, that I began in earnest to study, acquiring habits in that respect which had long been impossible, and which, alas! became after the year 1845, equally impossible again. I had my

three years of study and day dreams, which I have never forgotten, but which in these pages I must not attempt to recapitulate. We felt at once installed and happy in our new abode, where, on the evening of our arrival (the 22nd of December, I think), so mild was the weather, and so bright the moonlight, that at midnight my wife went with me to make, for the first time, *le tour des ramparts*. During that three years' interval, how unexpected was the tenour of my life! Living, or wishing to live in utter seclusion, continually occupied with my books, I yet received many visitors, and, though rarely accepting of invitations, was invited *par-tout*. What wonder would it have been if under these circumstances a mere Shadow had become conceited of Substance! But I cannot even plead my own defence on the score of such delusion, considering, as I did, our situation to be very precarious. This much, however, appeared to me very sure, namely, that the promises already mentioned would be fulfilled in our behalf; that my fixed allowance of annual income would not be withdrawn; that after my long work was completed it might be sold for a considerable sum; and that, thereafter, by devoting the application which it had cost me to writings of lighter import, I might with great ease gain 250*l.* per annum, this alone being enough for our necessary expenditure at Boulogne.

It seems strange to pass over nine volumes of closely written diary with a notice of only one page, more especially as they contain divers animated discussions on subjects not yet worn out, also recollections of some very distinguished sojourners at Boulogne. But under present circumstances I must dismiss these volumes as if their contents literally were but records of a dream. I have

already owned how much importance we had too rashly attached to certain promises and prospects. But in 1842, that kind-hearted relation, to whom we looked for their fulfilment, became seriously ill, and about Christmas-tide that year occurred his death. During the preceding eighteen months promises had been made by us on the faith of promises elsewhere, and those on our part being unfulfilled, menaced a heavy recoil. By that relation's death, the fixed income on which I had relied was suddenly reduced to less than half its former amount, and although by legacies he had provided for my son and daughter, his residuary legatee had a life-rent interest in those and all other similar bequests. From this it might have seemed that in dictating his last will, he had thought it fitting to overlook the promises of *immediate* assistance and support which we had received from him, but it was not so; for by a very unusual clause he had expressly vested in his residuary legatee the power, by relinquishing that life-rent interest, of "accelerating the payment of their capital to any of the legatees therein interested." Thus, *legally* speaking, there was an entire *freedom of choice*, whereby the kind intentions and promises of the testator might either be carried out to their fullest extent, or postponed *sine die*, and, no doubt for good reasons, the latter course was preferred. Every effort of interposition was made on my part directly, and afterwards by the kind interference of friends, to effect some mitigation of this resolve, but in vain. After every such endeavour had failed, and not till then, money was borrowed on these reversionary rights; but not till it was too late, nor until expenses had been incurred in the French courts, so that the pro-

ceeds never came into our own hands, but were instantly divided among creditors.

"Facilis est descensus—sed revocare gradum,—hic labor, hoc opus est!" For *bon vouloir*, — for the ardent wish to do only that which is right and honourable, unless the will can be followed up by deeds entirely successful, the poor of course gain no credit. If success be wanting, guilt cleaves to them, and to them *alone*.

Through the years 1843 and 1844, I still cherished the belief that as all was not gone, we might contract our expenses, and continue to reside in France. The same impressions were cherished even in 1845. But towards the winter of that year, reverses occurred on which I need not dwell. Processes matured—one in particular owing to the falsehood and treachery of an English resident, in whom I had placed over-weening confidence, which caused to me deep sorrow, and led to a train of complicated evils. Yet Hope revived, and "still travelled on." In 1846, however, precisely at a time when, if allowed to persevere uninterruptedly in the plans which I had then formed, our affairs might have been retrieved, I was brought under the necessity, almost at a moment's warning, of leaving that house to which I had so long cleaved as my home. By this event, unimportant as it may seem to others, my habits of industry, peace of mind, also my credit with the world of Boulogne, were irretrievably broken. Instead of being able to follow up, with undivided attention and energy the plans I had recently formed, my utmost efforts were needed in the first place to find a place of refuge for my family, and to procure them daily support afterwards. My day-dreams were, in-

deed, effectually dispersed. This change happened towards the end of July, when the town was so crowded that I could not find any lodgings, except either such as were too costly, or of the very worst description. In one of those last I took refuge. It was the most inconvenient and wretched abode I ever knew, with one solitary exception, namely, that of the "land" which I inhabited at Edinburgh in 1806. I think I could not have mustered resolution to enter into such an abode as this, had it not been for an accidental interview with Mr. Edmund Spencer, well-known by his travels in Circassia, and other works, who was residing there for a little while, being *en route* to Germany. In truth, his *good word* was needed to procure us shelter even in that repulsive asylum, where the landlord, himself suffering under the "res angustæ domi," demanded payment in advance.

It was an utterly bedeviled house, built originally on a wrong plan, and now fallen into a state of decay. Evidently no one had ever prospered under that roof. It had once been the abode of an English family, who made some efforts at improvement, and strove for existence there, but went at last to wreck and ruin. One might have thought there was a curse upon the place, extending even to the neglected garden, which was on a steep slope, where one could not walk without clambering up and tottering down. The only mitigating trait of the place, was the view from the windows of two rooms, one of which was tenanted by Mr. and Mrs. Spencer, the other by our worthy landlord. Perhaps I should add that in the garden were the remains of an arbour or grotto, where Mr. Spencer smoked his chiboucque every morning, and there was a shady

walk down hill, where, at his suggestion, we used to exercise at, what is called in Scotland, "*putting* the stone."

Truly that was for us a gloomy summer, the more so because a prevailing epidemic ran through our whole household, and the beautiful autumn came only to show us more clearly our changed and desolate state. I might say, without hesitation, that we had a battle for life. And yet, during the autumn, there were short lucid intervals,—gleams of sunshine,—especially when I escaped across fields and woods for a walk to the once royal Château d'Ordre, then tenanted, with garden and meadows and the remains of the king's furniture, by my friend Mr. William Sharp. *How* came it, that seemingly there was no being on earth, myself alone excepted, who could discover the beauties of this place? Are there not, by nature, characters completely isolated, who have their own peculiar feelings and notions distinct and separate from those of all other mankind? Even at this moment I vividly behold the long straight avenue, with its double rows of trees, leading down hill, one knows not whither, the château being still invisible. I yet see vividly the bright tints of the autumnal sun on the foliage, and, by degrees, make my way to the grand front of the old mansion, with its royal arms, and those also of the Barons d'Ordre. Next to a humble cottage of a few rooms, with its garden, the most enviable abode for a poor *littérateur*, is, I think, a ghastly old castle, which e enjoys freely to his own lot, and at a low rent, simply because all the rest of the world seem to look upon it with a kind of aversion or terror. Had I known of the deserted Château d'Ordre on crossing the

Channel, I should unquestionably have proffered the requisite rent of 50*l.*, instead of paying at the rate of 80*l.* per annum, as we at first did, to an amiable compatriot from Yorkshire, who, I believe, considered his cottage as extremely cheap at that sum, and would willingly have demanded more if he could have got it; but English residents were not partial to the forest; few among them even knew that there was such a place. A poor author might have had the royal château with its old furniture, its pictures and ghostly remembrances, all to himself, and no one in the Boulonnois would have envied him or wished to supplant him!

Towards the close of that autumn, our bedeviled house and the conduct of its proprietors became intolerable. Mr. Spencer broke with them, and determined to leave it, and so did we, for, with all my sedentary propensities, I never, for one hour, had entertained the notions of making a permanent home under that roof. Accordingly, when the usual storms came at the end of October, we once more migrated, having found a lodging which afforded all the accommodation we required on one *étage*, and at the low rent of two pounds per month. On account of economy, and for some other reasons, it would have been the best and most suitable abode for a poor author, that I have ever known; unfortunately, however, the *locale* was in the lowest part of the low town, subjected to malaria, and with infectious fever prevailing at the time in its vicinity. Not knowing aught of this, I no sooner stepped into our new abode than I took up the notion of making it a *pied à terre* and home. Retired enough we should be in all conscience. No Shadow could more decisively proclaim his consciousness of shadow-

ism than by making choice of such a murky den. Too truly, however (as wealth is said to beget wealth), poverty perpetuates and engenders poverty. Even the very moderate rent, which was rigidly demanded, fell heavy on those who no longer had means to live. We were fallen in the world, were *parials*, our credit was gone and we sought not to renew it.

From youth to age, as my reader well knows, I have been crotchety, and it seems to me not unworthy of record, that indirectly I am indebted for our protection that winter to the interposition or influence of my faithful old dog; moreover, that I owed my first acquaintance with him to an old and inveterate crotchet, namely that of a bias to take part with all those who are cruelly and despitefully used. The said faithful old dog, when I first met him in 1842, was a *pariah*, "*nourri à coups de baton*," and every night might be found wandering on the streets, without a roof to shelter him or straw for his bed. I thought he had good qualities, and deserved a better fate, and gradually he justified that opinion, and became to me a constant companion and friend.

With this faithful attendant, during that gloomy month of October, I was one afternoon walking on the sea-shore at Boulogne, when we met (as I thought) an utter stranger, and who would have passed as such, had he not been attracted to stop by the intelligent looks and gambols of Dash. This was enough to engage my attention, and I entered into conversation on his merits with the supposed stranger, who turned out to be a near neighbour (in days of yore) and friend, whom I had not seen for twenty years. He favoured me with a visit next morning, when I solicited his advice on our

sad situation, which he instantly admitted was a case of deep, *almost* hopeless gloom. On reading over the will of my late uncle he found that, be the testator's intentions what they might, his residuary legatee had entire power, which might be exercised or not according to discretion, and, in his opinion, the payment of legacies would not be accelerated in our instance or in any other. He most kindly added that by certain means on his return to London, he would insure us temporary aid to the amount of at least 40*l.*, to be placed under the management of a mutual friend at Boulogne, and as to literary employment, he specially suggested and recommended *the writing of these Memoirs.*

Alas, how changed was then my position at Boulogne! Two years earlier, this friend, had we met in like manner, would have found me able to receive him in a good commodious house, where he would have met the best society which the place afforded. Now, he found us in a narrow lodging in the worst *quartier*, deserted by all the world, and contending with poverty; yet his visits there were perhaps more frequent than they would have been had our sunshine continued. Need I add that the promises of this very sincere friend were punctually fulfilled? an event of the more consequence to us, because those kind neighbours whom I used daily to meet had by this time left Boulogne, and the town had for us become, comparatively speaking, like a desert. This temporary fund lasted till the month of February, during which time I wrote a volume and a half of memoirs (*since lost*) and divers essays, also continued my long metaphysical work, and brought it (for the third time) to a close.

Mr. M——, to whose benevolent exertions we were

then indebted, will not be displeased to hear that the fund was sometimes called "Dash's money," and that my poor old favourite yet lives, and is in his wonted place whilst I transcribe the following lines.

TO MY COMPANION AND FRIEND DURING MANY YEARS.

My very dear, my faithful dog,
My stedfast Dash, ere yet
The hour has come to make me rue
That we had ever met;
The hour I mean, when we must part,
"No more to meet again,"
Lift up thine honest face, old friend,
And hear a rhyming strain.

'Tis true enough, thou know'st not aught
Of artful minstrelsy,
But ne'ertheless, intelligence
Is beaming in that eye.
Thou know'st my voice; thou lov'st it well,
Thou lov'st it as of yore,
When thou wert young, and I had hopes
That will return no more.

Oh those were bright and happy days
No less for thee than me,
When morning's light still call'd us forth
The fresh green fields to see.
Ay, happy years we 've known, old friend,
When wintry tempests too
We gladly braved, and wander'd wide,
The dazzling snow-drifts through.

Those happy days were fleeting days;
Even years fled fast away,
And 'mid the woods and pleasant fields
I durst no longer stay.

With jocund mien, confiding heart,
Where'er I went, wert thou;
By sea and land, in storm or calm,
Loving and blithe as now.

Ay, *now!* For in our sad estate
Though Fortune frowns on me,
And thou art waxing old and frail,
And prisoners both are we,
Yet blithe and jocund are thy looks,
With eyes that seem to say—
"Old master mine, where'er thou dwell'st,
I am content to stay."

To stay?—But shall we part indeed?—
If I could e'er forget
Thy love, how could I be unchanged,
The same as when we met?
Should I not rather *lose myself,*
If e'er I failed to see
In thought, if not in earthly life,
Those looks of love and glee?

My very thoughts thou seem'st to share,
Yet not *fore*-thoughts like mine,
As if the cheering light of Heaven
No more for us would shine.
No, rather from thy placid looks,
Monition comes to me:
"Old master mine, the blessed Sun
From chance and change is free;"

A proverb old: "Cheer up! The sun
Is where he was." Whate'er
Betide us in our pilgrimage,
His light unchanged is there.

Though prison gloom, and slow disease,
Wear earthly hopes away,
Who dares decide that aught of good
For ever shall decay?

Thy jocund looks, old friend, thy love,
Thy matchless constancy,
These are not of this earthly sphere,
And therefore cannot die.
Thine eyes, 'tis true, are waxing dim,
Thy course will soon be o'er;
Mine, too! but yet, who dares to say,
"We part, to meet no more?"

As a matter of course, I became gradually attached to our humble lodging, and would not readily have exchanged it for a better. "Home was home, though never so homely." But a "change came o'er the spirit of the dream." Winter with all its gloom and rigour continued unabated, but the amount of our bank-stock had declined, and in February the account was "drawn close." Within the last three years, our world, both at home and abroad, had imperceptibly changed. Railroads and other speculations (many of them wild and delusive) had absorbed millions of money. My only other near relative had died. Instead of being able to earn 40*l*. per month as heretofore, I received for papers sent to London only thanks and praise, for the pecuniary recompense was comparatively infinitesimal. The market was said to be overstocked with "copy" in all departments, and what was worse, editors and publishers no longer had money to spare. Railroads occupied the attention of the rich. "Cheap literature" had come into fashion. Penny papers

almost supplanted magazines and reviews, and authors who used to gain 500*l.* could scarcely acquire 100*l.* per annum. Through that gloomy month of February we had great anxieties, and a daily struggle for subsistence. But far more serious trials awaited us. Fever, as I have said, prevailed in our *quartier*, and it reappeared at intervals during the winter and spring. On the 8th, of March, whilst the weather was more than ever inclement, my wife having as usual gone to church, suddenly returned home labouring under an attack of illness immediately threatening life. This dangerous attack was followed directly by nervous fever, and for six weeks afterwards her case was so precarious, that re-establishment to health and strength appeared hopeless.

CHAPTER XVIII.

TRANSIT THROUGH THE NETHERLANDS.—GRAVELINES.—DUNKIRK.—FURNES.—RINGELBERGIUS.—OSTEND.—LONDON.

I WILL not write more about that winter, the severity of which lasted till towards the end of April, and scarcely relaxed then. But with the month of May came at last the warm sunshine and west wind, with an emanation of leaves and flowers and blossoms. At that date also returned to Boulogne, our oldest and best friends, who with true Christian charity could forgive where there was much to be forgiven, and who were of opinion that in some respects we had been hardly, and not quite fairly dealt by. Accordingly their kind influence was exerted in our behalf, and no sooner had the menacing shadow of death been removed, than my spirits revived, and all worldly difficulties seemed easily surmountable. My resolution was fixed to remain at Boulogne, but as our present landlord was bent on repairing his house, and on charging double rent for the summer, I looked out for another habitation. Some favourable letters arrived from friends in England, and I believed that, with proper attention, industry, and management, our affairs might yet be brought into prosperous train; but within the month of June another change awaited us. The reversionary property, on which we had borrowed money, was advertised for peremptory sale by auction, on account of an arrear of

interest, and in order to take measures for preventing that sacrifice, it was deemed necessary that we should immediately return to England. Even creditors at Boulogne, who were personally interested in the matter, were of this opinion, and our best friends urged the necessity of migration. Obstinately, as of yore, I contended for the advantages of remaining stationary, and of transacting all that was really needful by written correspondence. Not being able to settle the point, I obtained a lease of our lodgings for another month, so gaining time to deliberate, and towards the end of that interval, resolved all of a sudden that we should cross the Channel, but upon one condition, namely, that we should proceed as directly as circumstances would admit, to Scotland. The notion of resuming "Life in London," under any phasis or any pretext, was to me distasteful and abhorrent. My impressions, drawn from thirteen years' experience of such life, were too deep to be overlooked or forgotten then.

"Take him at his word, and *go this very day*," were the expressions of a very sincere friend, on the —th June, 1847. And it was true enough, that had I reflected for another night, my resolution to remain in France would have revived in full force. Not till seven o'clock in the evening, did I finally acquiesce in the proposed plan. The British Consul being then in London, I found it would be hazardous in his absence to demand my permission to embark at Boulogne; delay might have occurred which would have frustrated the purpose of our journey. Consequently I called at a late hour on the Vice-Consul, receiving from him a passport for Belgium, with which I returned home, and thence, after ten o'clock in the evening, my wife and

son, attended by my faithful old "Dash," walked with me to the residence of our friends more than a mile distant. There the kindest reception, all sorts of refreshments, also warm travelling dresses, awaited us, and after ten minutes, a calesch, with excellent horses and an English driver, arrived to take us across the frontier.

Without a single writ against me, and acting with consent of a majority of our creditors, I was thus by the Consul's absence and other circumstances, placed in the false position of a runaway. But in order to rebut this impression, and to answer inquiries, if any such should be made, my daughter insisted on remaining for a fortnight at Boulogne, under the kind protection of the friends just now mentioned.

Away! away! in the cold grey light of a wintry morning, though the month was "rosy June," its bright green leaves contrasting strangely with the cheerless leaden sky! We had moreover a north-east wind, with a ceaseless drizzling rain. Our experienced *conducteur* wished to go by Capelle and St. Omer, but I preferred the level route (though somewhat longer), by the sea coast. We reached Calais in little more than two hours, and never halted till about four o'clock, when our horses needed corn and half an hour's rest, during which time coffee and tartines were served for ourselves.

Within that fleeting half hour how many thoughts and reflections passed through my mind!—more, perhaps, than thirty pages would suffice to tell! The quietness of that *auberge*, what a lesson it preached!—that sort of quietness which you seem to hear; that hushing of silence, which after a sudden halt follows by contrast the rattle of your carriage wheels! That sort of com-

fort, too, which is peculiar to such way-side inns, and which arises from the absence of all attempts at laboured or studied comfort, in a place where obviously the means are limited, and you must make the most of them as they are! And how gladly I would have accepted that farm cottage, with its quaint old pollards, and cabbage-garden, and hay-stack, for my future home, and forgotten all the tumultuous tumblings and writhings of the sand in the debtors' hour-glass of time, which had been tormenting my brain for the last three weeks! But though there may be peace and contentment for the poor, yet, according to the regulations of this world, there can be none for the debtor, whose life is not only miserable in itself, but, in Crabbe's memorable words in his letter to Burke, is also the cause of misery to all with whom he is connected.

Away! away! Before six o'clock, this dull, drizzly morning cleared up, and the summer sun broke through the clouds. He came out upon us, I think, at the old fortress of Gravelines, with its ditches and drawbridges, and convents, and lots of good old devotional books, still to be found in neglected repositories, and when discovered, sold perhaps for a price less than that given by a builder for a lot of old brick-bats! It was fortunate that I had a passport when at the gate of this place, otherwise the consequential old warder might, in his wisdom, have subjected us to tiresome delay. Our *conducteur*, like myself, preferred to halt in quiet, rural situations; they were more to his fancy; he had had enough of town-life in London and elsewhere; and, besides, the expense was less. So we rattled as if disdainfully through the brick-paved streets and across the draw-bridges of Gravelines; and in like manner did we

post through Dunkirk, which appeared to me one of the most sombre towns I ever met with—a place to make a dull rainy day tenfold more gloomy. Towards ten o'clock we had come into a fine rural district of French Flanders. I remember especially one vista formed by the broad *chaussée*—a vista certainly not less than six miles long, in the straightest possible line, with its double row of waving verdant trees on each side. No landscape gardener, however averse to the obsolete principles and practice of Le Notre, could have failed to admire this road; and we had the more time to do so, having halted about mid-way at another rustic *auberge*, where we were entertained in the grand *salle*, or common room, with its *batterie* of implements *de cuisine*, all bright and polished like mirrors.

Onward! onward! Before three o'clock we had halted at Furnes, a quiet old town, which remains indelibly on my remembrance, perhaps because I had never been at Ghent, nor Bruges, nor Louvain, where the same traits of antiquity and obsolete manners are still more *prononcé*. The churches, convents, public buildings, and even dwelling-houses, all seemed to me unchanged and perfect from the era of the fourteenth or fifteenth century—(some excepted, which may be of yet earlier date)—and one might suppose, moreover, that the present inhabitants were determined to have nothing to do with the goings-on of the modern world, inasmuch as I could not in my perambulations discover any traces of modern literature, not even of newspapers, nor detected any *café* where the news of the day were discussed. Truly, one might soon forget the world, and be forgotten by it there. The people, however, all seemed contented and occupied after their own fashion, one favourite pursuit being obviously that of gardening.

Wherever a street diverges from the main square, you are very sure that it will soon terminate in the shady walk which surrounds the town, and where you find the gates of numberless gardens and orchards, each being the separate care and chosen solace of some respectable burgess.

Among his other eccentricities, the very original, but now forgotten, Ringelbergius determined that he would travel perpetually; moreover, that he never by any chance would settle for more than a fortnight in any one place. In plain truth, the shades of literary character are numberless as the varieties of leaves in the forest,—each "the same and yet another," and each excluding all the rest by infinite limitation. Cherishing, as I believe, quite as much of the literary bias as this learned professor could possibly do, I rarely sojourn, even for the shortest time, in any tolerable place, without wishing to rest there, and find in it a home. This wish revived (perhaps for the last time!) at the poor neglected town of Furnes, though the realization of it went no farther than a needful halt there for twenty-four hours.

At Ostend the weather turned more wintry and tempestuous, and my wife's health being still in a very precarious state, we were under the necessity of resting for some days. But with July the summer began, and I looked out for the first boat to cross the Channel, which happened to sail about midnight. Perhaps the last time that I beheld a truly serene and tranquil moonlight and morning together, was on leaving Ostend before nearing the English coast. Gradually as the day advanced, and the banks of the Thames were

visible on each side, the serenity faded away, and gave place to dark forebodings. Accordingly, as the river's banks closed in, coming nearer and nearer, methought the summer leaves had lost all their verdure; as we passed enclosed villas and rows of suburban houses, I could not for my life help thinking of the purse-proud egotism, and, perhaps, griping avarice protected within the former, and of that egotism (the same in another phasis) toiling and struggling for means of life, that lurks within the latter. But in very truth, I had some trifling excuse for not being in the best of humours, for the peculiar excellence of English manners was soon forced on my attention, and on board the steam-boat I was immediately placed in my proper station of *pariah*. I had a dog, forsooth, who would not part from me for a moment, nor I from him, and I had not five shillings to spare in order to propitiate the steward of the cabin in his favour. In France he had accompanied me, and been welcome in all society where I visited; he would have been admitted into church even; but manners in England are more refined; we do not speak often of that adventure in the life of a De Montmorenci, on the strength of which, respect was afterwards claimed throughout France for the dog's character, as, in regard to fidelity and obedience, a moral guide and sacred emblem; in fact, I doubt whether we ever heard the story at all! We do not speak *too* frequently about St. Francis of Sales, and his patronage either of dogs or of the poor; but very frequently, indeed, it happens that in polite circles we vote the dog a nuisance. Knowing this full well, the steward looked for his propitiatory five shillings, but in vain; and consequently we never entered the cabin, nor par-

took of any refreshments, but all four remained on deck through the night; in fact, we were *proscrit*. I had, by the bye, a distant relation on board, whom I had not seen or heard of for the preceding twenty years; one possessed of such ample fortune that her travelling equipage and retinue occupied most of the vessel.

Arrived at Blackwall, after the usual rapidity of search and national politeness, always to be met with at an English Custom-house, we proceeded, according to my choice, to one of the oldest inns in Bishopsgate-street, where I hoped to find refuge for only a single day, or a few hours, until we could re-embark in a steam-boat for Edinburgh. Need it be added that three travellers, looking jaded and care-worn, with only a *sac de nuit* for each, were regarded with an eye of suspicion, or that the charges at this tenth-rate hostelry were not one iota less exorbitant (room-rent excepted) than would have been the case at Fladong's or even the Clarendon? Discovering these facts, and being, through the kindness of an old and respected friend, provided with travelling expenses, I felt only the more desirous to step on board an Edinburgh steamer, which was to depart about eleven at night; and I continued obdurate against all arguments to the contrary, until nine o'clock, when, with great reluctance, I removed to a lodging-house at the "west-end," where, most assuredly, the favourite notion of seeking a home never for one instant entered, or could enter, my mind.

Ce n'est que le premier pas que coûte. Contrary to my intentions, we were once more in London, and it was deemed needful that I should await there the return

of my daughter from Boulogne. Meanwhile we were visited by several of our former friends, by the Archbishop of Corfu, Dr. N. Lazarian, Dr. Beattie, Professor Hornemann, and others. Schemes crowded upon schemes, all of which, to my notions, were distasteful, because they were inconsistent with my favourite plan of seeking a home in Scotland. But the money intended for our voyage thither was soon broken up and dispersed; besides, it became necessary to try some immediate expedient to save reversionary property from the hammer. With that intent, I called one afternoon on a zealous, sincere, and frank-spoken clergyman, to whom I had been known when abroad, and who did not hesitate to receive my visit, though he knew well that our worldly circumstances were sadly changed. This worthy man was no formulist. Wherever anxiety, tribulation, or distress of any comprehensible kind existed among his neighbours, he made it a duty to diminish the pressure if he possibly could. In our case, the mere truth, without any colouring from excited feeling, was indeed more than enough. To my brief summary his reply was, "A bad sauce this, for a man's dinner!—enough to give one the horrors! Cheer up! I tell you, and remember that in these temporal matters, when the worst comes to the worst, we must hoist a signal of distress—that 's all. If you don't know how to go about it, I must help you."

It has been frequently held, according to a peculiar system of logic, that an autobiography should "contain nothing personal, seeing that what is merely personal cannot interest the general reader." I am not sure that I quite appreciate what is to be understood by

the term general reader (or reader general) but if, under this appellation, it is intended to express every one who can read, I cannot help suspecting that an attempt to interest all the members of so wide a circle would be abortive, and in other respects rather silly. Be this as it may, I am under the necessity of winding up my own history, and shall do so as briefly as possible. Within that same afternoon, by the interposition of one truly noble friend, to whom I am under infinite obligations, the property to which I have so often alluded was saved from the hammer, and soon afterwards we were enabled to remove to another temporary asylum, the residence of a family on the point of leaving town, whose advertisement announced that for two months the house was to be let "on your own terms." Again I resisted as long as I could, every argument for prolonging our stay in London; temporary refuge even in a palace there could not have attracted me so much as permanent shelter in the humblest abode, wherein I might hope for rest, and which might be called our home. But once more the die was cast and we remained in town.

CHAPTER XIX.

LITERARY PROSPECTS.—VISIT TO EDINBURGH.—BLIGHTED HOPES.

Among auto-biographies, one which I have found specially entertaining is in six volumes, by a poor Itinerant, (S. W. Ryley) who tells us about all his domestic cares, even his expedients, sometimes ineffectual, to obtain lodgings or dinner, and particularly how little Fan, the pet spaniel, became tired on a long march, and must be carried by "Anne," which added to their troubles, and so forth. Following this eminent example, and asssuming that a Shadow were an *entity* as good as an itinerant actor (which is doubtful) I might make a chapter about the prospects of that autumn; but I shall name only one among divers favourable events which unfortunately seemed to indicate that we should protract our stay in London. Whilst in France, I had translated Kant's Critique three times over, and written an original commentary, without considering whether my labours would ever bring sixpence of pecuniary remuneration, though I intended that my work should one day be published either at the author's risk or by subscription. It was therefore a matter of agreeable surprize to hear, by the merest accident, that a new translation of this misunderstood and maltreated work was actually wanted and wished for; still more, that a respectable sum would be paid for my translation

provided I would finally revise it for the press, condensing, if possible, the commentary into so narrow limits that the whole might be comprised within one closely printed volume. This appeared indeed a special instance of good fortune, which in all probability would not have occurred if we had quitted London, and it seemed a realization, to some extent, of my earliest day-dreams. Thirty-five years ago I had insisted that unremitting labour, even in the most unfrequented and neglected paths of literature, was not without its utility, but would one day or another meet with reward. This, as already said, was only one among many plans both pleasant and promising from which, with sufficient industry, a competent income might be derived, if only I had 100*l.* of capital to rest on, and permanent shelter for our heads. The "little tranquil home" was yet a *desideratum*.

Even this appeared then to offer itself to our acceptance, though at a very dear rate; but in what district of London can a home be discovered at a rent suitable for the poor? Two months wore away; we were under the necessity of removal, and after searching in vain for eligible apartments, by the merest accident we met with a widow lady extremely desirous to get rid of her establishment, namely, a small house, with garden plot, in the New-road, wherein, among other attractions, was a large quantity of well-chosen books, upon the use of which she herself seemed to set no store, but which to me were of great importance. *Quid multis morar?* After two or three meetings, every objection was got over; I was induced to take that house for a year, and having done so, found myself soon afterwards under the necessity of proceeding to Edinburgh alone.

Were the same circumstances to recur again with no

better experience of life than I then had, it is scarcely possible to imagine that I could act more conscientiously than I did. Repeatedly I had consulted with my old and stedfast friend, Mr. James Alexander Simpson, solicitor, and others, on the proposition which I intended submitting to my late uncle's executors. They found it so reasonable in every respect, and so considerately expressed, that, unless upon the supposition (hardly admissible) that some hostile spirit existed against us, it could not be refused. Arrived at Edinburgh in the gloom of a cold wintry evening, I took refuge at an hotel recommended to me by a fellow-traveller, and cherished hopes that a few days' sojourn might enable me to accomplish my purposes. I have written already about those painful impressions caused by revisiting a deserted abode, which has once been regarded as home, and where the ghosts of hours, never to return, glide mournfully around us. *All* Edinburgh now appeared to me under this influence ; I had given up my home there twenty-one years ago, and had not crossed the Tweed for the last eighteen years. In truth, I scarcely knew it for the same place, life there had merged into a phasis so different. Many friends and connexions were dead and gone ; among survivors, those whom I left young and buoyant had become elderly and grave. The prevailing *tone*, I suspect, had not much improved ; not merely at first, but afterwards, the whole town appeared to me more cold and sombre, and (except for the railroad whistle), more silent than heretofore. No *cadies* with numberless sedan-chairs appeared at the street corners ; at night no brilliantly lighted houses indicated, as of yore, the hospitality of rout suppers and balls.

Before leaving London, I had made it a point to consult with my oldest and best friends, and I did the same at Edinburgh. The late Sir James Gibson Craig was the first to read over and consider our case, and as his advanced years and state of health prevented personal interference, he wrote, at my request, a few lines, expressing his approval of my proposition, and hopes that it would be acquiesced in. Mr. Shepherd, my late uncle's senior executor, weighed every word of my statement, and individually expressed the same opinion; but, unfortunately for me, he was in a minority. I had to wait until the end of October, when his colleagues returned to town, and then I met only with an unqualified refusal. Lonely and isolated as I then was, I could not help feeling this disappointment very deeply. Past experiences had not yet afforded me any example of an exactly parallel kind. Having so anxiously drawn up my proposition, and so carefully noted the reasons on which I rested my hopes of a favourable result (reasons which not in my own judgment merely, but in that of all my advisers, were considered more than adequate), I had not deemed it even possible that such would be at once rejected as unworthy of consideration. But alas, there were causes for this result, of which, at that time, I knew nothing.

I had thought of only a week's absence, and as every passing day increased my feverish anxiety to return home, I paid no visits whatsoever but to a *very* few confidential advisers, whose unalterable kindness I remember with deep gratitude. During my forced stay at Edinburgh, and notwithstanding the changes there, how often arose the wish to make it again my home! I even sought about in by-streets and courts which I had

known of yore, in hopes of proving that we might find a domicile not too expensive; but of all places the most attractive was an old farm-house at Canaan, with a large neglected garden, which at that wintry season offered itself at a low rent. It was during my walks to that neighbourhood, going to or returning from the house of my stedfast friend, Mr. J. Wilson, that long-lost feelings revived; the town appeared changed, but the venerable trees, the *sough* of the autumnal wind, the wide and varied prospect, the cheering gleams of sunlight, and the serene quietude of moonlight could not change, even through the medium of disappointment and anxiety, but were as they had been, "ever ancient, ever new." During these walks too, my hopes revived, and I reflected that with the help of a life-insurance, means at least remained in my power to raise 150*l*. To this, accordingly, I directed my attention, hoping almost every day that it would be the last of my protracted sojourn. But suddenly my proceedings for this purpose came to a close. My wife had never thoroughly recovered from the dangerous illness of the preceding spring. One after another the letters which I received from home became more and more discouraging, till at last I perceived that although she did not acknowledge illness, her life was again in danger. A few lines from my daughter betrayed the truth. I locked up the insurance policy for 200*l*. in the hands of my uncle's trustees, in order that I might obtain an immediate advance of only one year's annuity. Thus my financial plans were completely broken. It was a duty, no doubt, to remain at Edinburgh, till they were completed; but without hesitation I flung that duty overboard, and after receiving my daughter's

letter, would rather have made a much greater sacrifice, than have staid for another twenty-four hours. Enough of this: I returned home by an express train with the sum of 39*l.* as our only immediate means, to uphold those arrangements on account of which I had applied for 300*l.*

The deficiency was formidable, but I recked not of that, for I had other and very different cares, and felt most thankful for having been able to return home with any provision whatsoever. In this place my warmest acknowledgments are due to my old acquaintance and kind neighbour, Mr. John Gray, to whose humanity and great medical skill I am under obligations, not merely as regards that occasion, but many others, which no words of mine could adequately express. As indispensable means towards recovery, he enjoined, above all, unbroken quiet, and, if possible, peace of mind. Fearing that my appearance in London might possibly, as in days of yore, prove a *casus belli*, I felt so anxious to carry out his instructions, that for the ensuing month I scarcely ever quitted my own house and garden. Having failed almost utterly in my financial arrangements, I naturally enough (however foolishly), reverted to the old aphorism, "Labour is the poor man's capital," upon which, therefore, he may freely draw. I endeavoured to forget that the *dictum*, though received among us as highly respectable, is yet in too many instances not worth a straw in practice, seeing that a poor author in the state of Shadowism may draw upon his own labour *ad infinitum*, till his heart aches, yet from one cause or another, the pecuniary recompense may be deferred from day to day till he dies. No matter; I had a quiet interval at all events, and made the most

of it, having divers long works on hand; *imprimis*, the beginning of these memoirs; secondly, a novel and, though last not least, my new translation of Kant's Critique, with original commentaries, and I reckoned that if I could not meet my engagements by hard cash in hand, I might buckle to the task, and provide against that deficiency by hard work.

My labour progressed accordingly, but it did not require any great share of prudence to perceive that 39*l.* could not do the work of 300*l.*, nor even of 100*l.* The month of January had its anxieties and gloom. Through February and March we had again a hard struggle for life, and it became too evident that before any one of my poor productions could be finished for the press, a warfare like that to which I had been subjected in former years might be commenced *de novo*. Under these sad impressions, I implored advice from Mr. Roscoe and other friends, and the result was that towards the end of April an entire change for the better took place in my situation and prospects.

I had only one pressing debt, namely, for house rent; but I had repeatedly seen our worthy landlady and her house-agent, who expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with my explanations and assurances, that the debt was provided for, and would shortly be liquidated. Unfortunately, however, she afterwards found other advisers, who recommended two actions at law, one against myself for 78*l.*, the other against the house-agent for the self same debt, on the ground that he, having accepted an unworthy tenant, when it was his duty to find a good one, had himself become liable for the rent. Writs were issued accordingly, and I per-

ceived too clearly that mischief was hatching, but having only one creditor to deal with, I rashly imagined that I might nevertheless contrive to obtain fair play.

In vain did I appeal to our good landlady, who too truly said that she was no longer allowed any judgment or will of her own in the matter. She would have been perfectly contented with re-possession of her house and the pledge of my annuity for two years, which I proffered at our very first meeting on the subject. I now found her attended by a legal adviser, who thought it proper to say that the security was delusive, treated every other proposition on my part with contempt, assured me that my exertions were not required, and that he would see his client righted by means of the process then pending against the house-agent. I saw clearly enough how this would turn out, and said so. It was a vexatious and useless action, by which lawyers alone could benefit, and the expenses which must ultimately fall on the good lady would be enormous. I represented this in the strongest terms, but of what avail is the voice of a Shadow? Her adviser was in command, had, forsooth, the law on his side, and I was an unqualified interloper.

On Easter Monday, the generous kindness of *one* truly noble friend (to whom I never can sufficiently express our gratitude), placed me at once *au dessus* of all immediate troubles, though not above anxiety for the future. Shortly afterwards another kind friend concerted a plan to raise 100*l*., which, with some persevering exertions on my own part, would most certainly have been realized, but the plan was not matured till the 20th of May. I had literary work

almost ready for 100*l.* more. After the middle of May would revert into my own possession the locked-up policy of insurance for 200*l.*, and I had luckily found a friendly neighbour, who was able and willing on that basis, joined with my annuity, to lend as much as would enable me to quash the brooding mischief, to cut short that worst of pen-and-ink works, an attorney's bill of costs, and pay in full for my short occupation of a roof-tree, which, alas, had not proved a "*tranquil* home."

Thus, I had at length provided against all existing emergencies, and a very short time would serve to realize our expectations. I should have enough and to spare, so that I might pay other debts. That Easter Monday was followed by bright though anxious days—bright, because once more I had a short interval of green leaves and blossoms, and anxious because every item of the resources above mentioned depended on my own personal care, labour, and exertions. If my hand were once taken from the wheel, the plans would, indeed, turn into mere shadowism, and become as useless as if they never had been framed. Anxious, therefore, to avoid an impending arrest, I proposed an immediate payment of 30*l.* on account of the solitary claim, but was told that no compromise could be entertained, inasmuch as by so doing the basis for the separate action would be nullified. On the 24th and 25th May, I waited on our good landlady's attorney, requesting him to take notice that the whole amount would be ready within, at most, ten or twelve days from that date, till the expiry of which interval, inasmuch as the realization of my plans depended on my personal liberty, I requested an armistice. To this he answered that, on my part,

nothing more was required than to give his client possession of her house, which condition being fulfilled, the writ of *capias* would most certainly be suspended.

I might have seen through the sophistry, but was unwilling to believe that any so gross deception would be practised, allowing myself to forget for the moment that strategy of all kinds is allowable in war, and that, besides, no one is under obligations to keep faith with a Shadow. Consequently, I appointed the 27th May to give up possession, and on that day in the afternoon arrived our landlady, attended by the legal adviser whom I had met at her house, and divers other auxiliaries. They appeared smilingly, and I received them as friends. Once entered, her zealous representatives gave their orders as if the house had been their own; but before I had time to find and cancel the agreement for a lease, and so give them legal possession, I found myself once more in custody of a sheriff's officer, well known to me of yore, being taken in execution for 78*l.* and costs, making an amount of 96*l.* Once more, and in my old age, I had been brought into collision with that cherished law of arrest, on whose exemplary and beneficial workings, in the case of others, I have already so often commented. In one instant I was by this event forced into a position as entirely hopeless and powerless, either in regard to the protection of my family or the payment of debts, as if at the same moment I had died. The *casus belli*, according to my notions, was quite obvious. The good landlady wished for settlement of the debt, and so did I; she would have been contented with the offers I made, but her advisers

aimed at a very different purpose, namely, the carrying out separately an expensive action against another party, the necessary basis for which was my insolvency and ruin. The plaintiff and I both wished for peace, but her advisers, for their own purposes, declared war. But *per contra*, they acted *according to law*, and therefore "could do no wrong;" they had received her instructions to act in her behalf, consequently must abide by her *dicta;* and, according to them, the real *casus belli* was nothing more nor less than the rascally conduct of a Shadow, who had no right to any place in this world—an impostor who had cruelly wronged their too amiable and confiding client, and against whom they felt themselves called upon in honour and duty to be her counsellors and protectors. How well they acquitted themselves of this responsibility, the sequel (if I should write any more) will show.

On that occasion I made the most of the few moments allowed me "by law," to protest against the foulness of the treachery to which I had been subjected, and as I had not given up the written agreement I then refused to do so. My visitors had obtained entry on false pretences, were without writ of ejectment or other legal warrant for being on the premises, consequently were trespassers, the lease having four months longer to run; nevertheless my family preferred to remove that night, being glad at last to walk out into the streets and take shelter in the first lodging they could find unoccupied. Had it not been for the generosity of the same noble friend already mentioned, whose character stands isolated and alone in the world of England, and whose aid rendered to them on Easter Monday was not exhausted, they would have been

without any such place of refuge. Most truly they were homeless; left without earthly guide or protector, seeing that for the ensuing four months my only sphere, not of action but of "*living death*," was within the sick-ward of the sheriff's prison.

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

And here these memoirs might have concluded. The Shadow has played his part; like an "*ombre Chinoise*," he has had his fitful rounds on the *medium*, and being from thence abruptly withdrawn, he is deposited with other lumber in the exhibitor's box, making room for his betters! But, too surely, there are secrets worth knowing in that gloomy receptacle. There is life within it, too, though it be but a "death-life;" and possibly, enough, the secrets of the prison house, if adequately developed, would convey more important lessons than any other *memoranda* in these volumes. And in such developments there need not be one shade of *egoisme*. The object, on the contrary, should be to illustrate the beautiful workings of so-called English law, under which one statute, without mercy or ceremony, knocks another on the head, together with its admirable effects on the commonweal, particularly as regards moral culture, and the great advantages thereby derivable to creditors.

In my own case, however, the interests of the unlucky creditor were very completely flung overboard, for instead of desiring that I should pay the debt, her legal champions would, I presume, have felt annoyed

and disappointed if I had done so, their plan being to lead her into complicated, and as the result proved, useless litigation, the costs of which, as I am told, mounted at last to more than 300*l.* But, then, the blame of all this was *entirely mine.* According to them, I had become her tenant without means of realizing the hopes that she entertained of receiving rent, therefore, of course, was a criminal deserving punishment. But for those who, becoming her advisers and *soi-disant* protectors, not only were without means to realize the hopes which they held out, but also involved her in such enormous costs, was there no punishment? Assuredly not; for, as already said, it could not be *their* fault; they acted "according to law," and the entire blame fell on the Shadow. The loss and misery did not fall on him alone, the plaintiff shared *that;* but, again, her advisers were not in the wrong, 't was the law that did it; they, of course, were honourable men!

If my reader be pleased to remember, that from youth to age, I cherished one solitary, or paramount purpose, namely, that of securing a tranquil home, and this, assuredly, not for myself alone, but for the sake of others, who were ill educated to bear with the wild waves and storms of life, it will be evident that my present case was rather a hard one. If the sheriff's detestable prison had been changed into Windsor palace with all its luxury, to my notions matters would not have been mended thereby, but rather made worse. My notion of home was unalterably *complexive:* and if one iota of the component parts were wanting the whole was destroyed. If dissevered even from my poor old favourite, commemorated in rhyme at page 290,

I should have found the said palace no better than the far-famed dungeons at Madrid, or "lead chambers" at Venice.

Dissevered I was very completely, except as regards the invisible chain of thoughts and affections, which no gaoler's writ can break. In vain did my poor old dog search, and whine, and mourn for his master at the hour of his accustomed walks. That summer was not a bright one for him, nor for me. In a short time, under the peculiar influences of Whitecross-street, I became too ill even to write an ordinary letter. The plans which had so recently been bright and promising were broken and gone, and lived only in remembrance, as a source of pain by contrast. Lucretius described admirably well his own comfortable plight, while standing secure on the firm shore and looking at the shipwreck; but I suppose he never troubled himself to reflect what *might* have been his feelings, if the dearest friends of his own-fireside circle had been among the drowning wretches; still less, if possible, would he exert his imagination to guess what *they* felt at beholding so near to them that firm ground which they could reach no more.

In plain terms, the kind suggestions of my friend, Mr. Roscoe, framed as they were to prevent misfortunes which had now actually taken place, became useless, and the *modus operandi* which his plan required might quite as well have been entrusted to King Cheops, in his pyramid, as to one in my state of "living death." I could not now raise one sixpence on any security, as it was held that my signature in prison was not worth a rush, and that if one debt were cleared away, others would immediately come on and

fill up its place. Finally, as to writing books, I had not a moment of solitude or peace night nor day, to collect my thoughts, and could not finish a coherent page. Besides, if I laid papers on any of the tables (which were all common), this, of course, was voted a bore, and if I turned off my eyes for a moment, they were liable to be seized and hidden by some facetious fellow-prisoner.

So passed the months of June, July, and August, my family during all that while having the hardest possible struggle for life. The summer sun shone as of yore, but its radiance was dimmed for them, and I saw nought of it but a gleam now and then on the smoky walls and chimney stacks. I was egotistic and contumacious enough to maintain that the proceedings against me were essentially illegal as they were unjust. For be it observed, that such proceedings inevitably assumed the character of a persecution, a war unto death. Unless my opponents contrived to sustain their allegations, that I had wilfully deceived their client, and was utterly insolvent, the machinations for upholding a separate action for the same debt would have been frustrated. As to the insolvency, there could be no doubt, for they had contrived to clench *that* point, and all that remained needful was the work of defamation. Meanwhile, I thought only how my family might be kept in life, but while cherishing that purpose, I laboured at once under the combined evils of imprisonment, poverty, declining health, and slander.

A formidable odds! These four evils were, indeed, like four giants, by three of whom the victim was held prostrate, while the fourth, namely, defamation, kept

beating him without mercy. A little gasp of quiet, however, was allowed me even in that prison, where, by chance, one morning I got possession of what was called the fever-ward, or "dead-room," keeping the key, contrary to all precedent, in my own pocket, till it should be wanted for some urgent case. It was a garret, from a window of which a prisoner had thrown himself not long before, his body being smashed on the pavement beneath. It proved a great resource and consolation to me that dead-room; the more so, as I believe no one envied me its possession.

But I could not remain there, as it became requisite for the treatment of a fever patient, whose life was despaired of. The kind-hearted governor perceiving that my case became every day more unmanageable, at last entreated that I would remove from his custody at his own expense, and accordingly, at the end of August, I migrated to the Queen's Bench, where, in some degree, my strength returned, but the state of my mind, on account of family distresses, became worse. Wearied of confinement, I applied, on the 26th of September, for protection under "Lord Brougham's Act;" my case being one of the earliest after the said Act was transferred from the Bankruptcy to the Insolvency Commissioners. I encountered opposition at the outset, on the plea that I had omitted to file a certain paper, which my adversaries had reason to believe was lost, and which, when found, could not be worth a straw to any one. This being got over, not without delay and additional expense, and protection granted, I had an interval, nay, a whole month, of liberty. During that time, I once more succeeded in settling my family in a temporary home, where I gra-

dually collected my books and papers, which I could scarcely bear to leave even for a single hour.

With the perfect conviction on my own mind that every possible means, however unfair, would be used against me, I was, nevertheless, assured by my legal advisers, that opposition would be in vain, as there was nothing extraordinary in the plaintiff's plea, and there never had been a fairer schedule than mine. My case came on for hearing on the 2nd of November, when the witnesses were all in attendance; but Mr. Commissioner Law happened to feel tired with his previous labours, and declined to take it at that time. Two days thereafter, all parties were convened again; but on that occasion, the hearing was most unexpectedly adjourned at the request of the opposing counsel, who submitted that another day would suit him better. At length, on the 8th of November, for a third time, the case was called, and in the absence of a witness whose evidence might have been conclusive on my side, I took my place in court. The plaintiff had attracted a host of *soi-disant* friends, from whom, however, she sat apart and alone, not interchanging a word with any of them. They, however, mustered and murmured together like a swarm of bees (I never saw so busy a *clique*, except in the case of General Macdonell, at Clerkenwell), the sole drift of the leaders being defamation, or, if possible, annihilation of a poor Shadow.

Never had a counsel an easier task than my friend Mr. Cooke, that morning. He had, indeed, been amply instructed, and came to court with a brief so enormous, that if the *casus belli* had been 78,000*l.* instead of 78*l.*, it need not have been any longer. It had perhaps been the gradual work of the preceding six

months—a kind of romance, for which the author would be better paid than most authors of the present day for their labours! The proposition he had to contend for was merely negative, namely to distract the court's attention from the narrow merits of the plaintiff's case, and by other means, no matter how unfair, to prevent any immediate decision in favour of the defendant. Under the so-called old law, as I am advised, this *modus operandi* must have been quashed instantly, but with the latitude afforded by Lord Brougham's "Protection Act" (then and there a novelty), it worked beautifully.

For almost three hours did Mr. Cooke occupy the attention of the court with matters quite irrelevant to his client's complaint—matters of which my counsel absolutely knew nothing, and upon which I myself was not allowed to interpose one syllable in explanation. For more than an hour he facetiously entertained the audience with my *so-called* examination; putting questions to which he was instructed previously what my answer *must* be, and instantly following up that answer with an "elegant fiction" of his own, so that at every move he had a particle of truth overlaid with a vicious fabrication. Perceiving his drift from the outset, I wished to counteract it; but in vain. As already said, the honourable Commissioner would not allow of my interposing one word; and when I repeatedly left the box to admonish my learned counsel, his answer was, "'Tis quite irrelevant; let them say what they like. Besides, I shall move for an adjournment of the hearing." Herewith I was forced to be content. In regard to my opponent, I would not repeat the compliment paid by Warren Hastings to Burke, and say

"My admiration of his eloquence was such that, as I listened, I almost believed myself guilty." I admired, indeed, but mine was admiration of another sort. I could not help wondering at the extent of misrepresentation, calumny, and blunders, in which his fancy revelled.

In short, the real merits of the plaintiff's case, also the details in the schedule, were flung overboard, and I stood arraigned on account of matters not before the Court, not even within its jurisdiction, matters on which I was not allowed a hearing at all, and on which the *ex parte* fictions of my opponents were the only evidence. Discussion and proof were out of the question. I doubt not it was the belief of my learned counsel, Mr. Nicholls, that the honourable Commissioner would reject the irrelevant matter, and stick to the case immediately before him. Accordingly, in his defence he argued as he would have done under the "old law," adhering to the main points, namely, that after twenty-two years of proletarianism and alleged extravagance, the debts in all were not more than 2,700*l.*; that those incurred in London during the last eleven months, exclusive of assistance acknowledged from friends, did not amount to so much as 15*l.*; and as to the solitary case now before the Court, he at last moved an adjournment of the hearing, in order to the production of witnesses who could substantiate that I had provided means to pay the debt, which would have been done had I not been disabled by imprisonment.

Hearing no refutation nor discussion of my opponent's fictions, the honourable Commissioner appeared to take them all for granted, and in consequence adopted

some absolute fabrications as the ground of his postponing any adjudication. With regard to an adjournment of the hearing, his Honour would allow it by all means, provided it were acquiesced in by the opposing party, whose *only* object was to have the unfortunate Shadow again in their custody, so that they might have him to fall back upon, when their machinations in another quarter were worked out, and would yield no more. In conclusion, the judge, with great alacrity and amenity of manner, concurred in their wishes, declaring that it was quite clear to him the debt had been contracted "without *reasonable expectations* of being able to pay the same;" consequently he found himself under the necessity, according to provisions of the Act, of postponing his adjudication *sine die*.

Hard words, Mr. Commissioner Law! and as I have been since advised, opening an entirely original and peculiar interpretation of the Act in question. But let this be waived for the present. Whether his Honour's view of my particular case was or was not a correct one, may be judged by the fact, that this memorable debt, (after enormous expenses had been incurred) was afterwards settled *and paid* by precisely the same means which I had proffered, and which were approved by the plaintiff and her agent three months before my imprisonment; means which were within my power, and contemplated by me in case of need when I entered into the contract, and by which also I had intended to provide for two other debts, the existence of which has since caused me great regret and inquietude.

Hard words, Mr. Commissioner Law! Whether just or unjust I have enabled the reader to judge; but

lest the facts should not be sufficiently established on my own assertions, I might here subjoin a letter from the plaintiff's attorney, Mr. C. B. Wilson, containing ample *proof* that the honourable judge's *dictum* on that occasion was rather inappropriate.* In a word, it was founded on misrepresentations and false evidence; but no matter! the temporary purpose of my opponents was gained, and the wise proceedings of the honourable court, to which Mr. Cooke had given quite a facetious turn, were abruptly wound up. The November day closed in its usual gloom, and though the court had no power of committing to prison, I found myself again in custody. (Be it observed, that I endured in all more than eleven months of incarceration for this identical debt, and at the close of the ninth month, by advice, I petitioned on affidavit of illness, accompanied by medical certificate, praying that the court would appoint an early day for the rehearing of my case. The certificate proved in the strongest terms, that protracted confinement would tend to increase the malady, and to shorten life, to which his Honour responded with his usual amenity, that he would take the matter into consideration. Thereafter two months passed away, and from his continued silence, I infer that his judgment was not yet matured.)

I had thought to return home that day, and in the jocose language of the turnkey at the Queen's Bench, had, in fact, "returned home after a short absence." My poor dog, my fireside and books, were left far away. As the dark evening crept on, he would whine in vain for his accustomed walk, and wonder woefully

* The letter is in the hands of Octavian Blewitt, Esq., Great Russell-street, Bloomsbury.

what had befallen his old indulgent master. A Shadow, I am advised, may write about his dog, but not about his family. Every poor man (especially in England) has wife and children, and 'tis well known to all the rich that he farms them, and turns them to account as a means of gaining commiseration. This is vicious, of course, and must be *put down.* I can't help observing, however, that the Saturday night of this 8th of November, 1848, was a time of hard trials both for them and for me. I wrote home, by special messenger that such injustice and falsehood could not triumph long; that God and the Truth "were where they were," and so forth—as aggrieved Shadows usually express themselves when driven to the wall. But I became ill; I could neither work nor rest, and in that state, with little or no intermission, continued for the ensuing seven months.

The plea of injustice on my side would have availed me nothing, for be it oberved that an Insolvency Commissioner wields a power completely dissimilar from that of any other judge in England; for let his own views or *dicta* be what they may, the petitioner in that Court has no right of appeal to any other. If, however, it should be assumed from any of my preceding remarks that I intended to impugn the conduct of that respectable judge, who may be said latterly to have had my life at his disposal, I must guard against such error by merely repeating my former words, that his views were founded on misrepresentation and false evidence. As little am I disposed to blame, individually, Mr. C. B. Wilson, under whose name and management, as an attorney, the proceedings against

me were conducted, but by whom personally, as I firmly believe, they never were advised or instigated.

Most readers, I doubt not, will have thrown aside my book ere now. My table-talk towards the close will have become "too personal" and too dull for them. They do not intend ever being visitors or sojourners within prison walls, and therefore care not for such experiences. I did, however, consider it my duty to record the case of Mr. Halls, of General Macdonell, and of Haydon, to which I could have added divers others, had not those sufficed for my purpose. But most willingly I should have suppressed my own as being *de trop*, had it not been for attendant circumstances, which, when explained, will, I believe, amply excuse and justify the contents of this chapter.

During a long life, I have scarcely ever known any other instance of an obscure individual so perseveringly assailed by rancorous tongues as I have been! But when I add that my case being a memorable one (as the first instance of successful opposition under the new act), there appeared in the *Times* newspaper a record of the proceedings, and that this record has since been made use of against me by the said evil tongues, in a manner absolutely merciless, I believe that my statement of the truth, however personal, will appear pardonable. As the said record differed from every other which came out at the time, I could not help suspecting that it was not the work of any professional reporter, but had been got up by some one of the clique already mentioned, in order to assist their separate machinations. It began with the words—"the

insolvent SAID that he commenced practice as an advocate at Edinburgh, in 1817, but not finding that profession profitable," &c. After this veracious and (to my friends) truly ridiculous outset, the *ipse dixit*, the "he said" of the unfortunate deponent is carried on, and by implication, if not directly, made applicable to all the fictions and facetiæ in which my opponents indulged. All their ingenious conclusions were made to appear as if they had been facts elicited from the deponent in his own words, or established against him, *malgré lui*, and incontrovertibly; and although every point made by my opponents was equally false or blundering with that at the beginning, yet I am represented as having either averred or admitted that the whole was true. In good sooth, this was being made to appear publicly as an *autobiographer* after a very novel fashion!

This pleasant document came out upon the Monday, but I was then too ill and too isolated to inquire after newspapers. My heart was *at home*, and my thoughts wholly occupied with one paramount question —what was to become of my deserted and helpless family? On Thursday I saw the report for the first time, and immediately wrote a letter respecting it to the editor of the *Times*, but my communication was considered too late then, and I could not afford to pay for it by way of advertisement. Notwithstanding previous knowledge of our world as it is, I could scarcely have believed it possible with how great avidity and zeal this newspaper report was caught at, circulated, commented and improved upon against me, in quarters, too, where I should have thought there could not have been either time or inclination for such paltry employ-

ment. And the best of the *mauvaise plaisanterie* was that I could no longer complain of *malevolent* tongues, for those active commentators were surely not to blame for trusting the evidence of their own senses; they had "read it all in the *Times*," and was not this entirely sufficient and conclusive evidence?

The old aphorism, "Prosperity gains friends, adversity tries them," is still current. It has had its value for me. I gained more than 25*l.* by it, namely, the price of three magazine articles, of which it was the text; the first for Colburn, the second for Fraser, and the last for Hood; but I still consider it a stupid maxim. It is prosperity in most instances that tries friends, and adversity only proves the former conclusion. Those who are friends to a prosperous man *as such*, must naturally be his enemies when unfortunate; for nothing can be more opposite than prosperity and adversity, and the friends of one surely wont be the friends of the other. And there is another *sequitur*, namely, that such people never were friends of the man at all; on the contrary, they always regarded him as a mere Shadow, who had become adventitiously connected with Substance. It was the latter which they approved; the former might go hang! Would any one persist in loving a diamond after it has been thrown into a crucible, whence it comes out dust and ashes? A jovial laughing comrade,—a well stocked library—a better stocked cellar,—a good stud,—well-hung carriages,—abundant dinners,—good judgment in selecting a *chef de cuisine*, —above all, RESPECTABILITY,—these, in their way, are substantially good; but nullify these, and what then is the man? A lugubrious, wearisome, good-for-no-

thing Shadow; as a companion or friend not a whit more desirable than was Prince Charles Edward in his fallen state, when, in starvation and rags, and covered with sores, he must have died but for the courage and compassion of a woman. The society of the one is really good for us, makes us better in divers ways; we are improved physically by his dinners, and morally by his cheerful converse. The other, whose existence is a burden to himself and distress to all with whom he is connected, would have us to believe that the world we live in is a pandemonium where the inhabitants are no better than demons walking about in trowsers or farthingales; and if you listen to his sarcasms or jeremiads, instead of profiting by a good dinner at his expense, you will probably end by catching a headache, and losing all appetite for the customary haunch at your own.

This being the case, it must, I suppose, be matter somewhat memorable and worthy of record, if a Shadow, even in his very decadence of Shadowism, should still find any of his former friends and adherents who will cherish the soot and ashes on account of their former lustre, and will follow him even in thought to the gloomy cells of a prison. And it is quite clear that such friends can only be discovered among eccentric people. It is well enough known that nobody finds his way into a debtor's prison without being poor, and it has become an English axiom, that the poverty being exclusively the prisoner's own fault, he is placed there deservedly, and as a criminal. Assuredly, no one who in a proper degree values his own responsibility, would condescend to interfere for the benefit of such an outcast, or for that of his family,

about whom, like a pitiful dog, he whines and howls!

But, as I have often said, there are infinite varieties of character; and some few are so very eccentric, that they do not care a rush about "respectability," nor even about the dicta of Grandmother Grundy! Among such extraordinary people as connected with my own case, I cannot forbear noticing, with deep gratitude, the late William Wordsworth, one of the earliest, and who proved himself also among the most unalterable of my friends. I cannot forget the readiness, nay, eagerness, with which, jointly with Mr. Quillinan, he came to our relief, when Christmas drew on, and our troubles increased, and I remained in prison, oppressed by the public contumely of Mr. Commissioner Law's hard words, and the slander of numberless busy tongues, who volunteered their improvements thereon. Nor can I ever forget the kindness of the late Mr. Wentworth Beaumont, then on his death-bed, and of his nearest relatives.

If I do not particularise the names of other and surviving friends, it is because I am not sure whether they would like to figure in these records. With regard to the deceased (as I do not agree with the great Frederic, that life and consciousness, or any *individual* life and consciousness, ever perishes), so I believe that they are living and cognizant in a sphere where the dicta of Mrs. Grundy are not worth a rush, and where one act of disinterested benevolence will weigh more in the balance than a hundred bags either of miser's or spendthrift's gold. Imprisonment, poverty, illness, disgrace, and persecution, as I have often heard, are merely "temporal concerns" where-

with spiritual advisers have nothing to do. But in my character of *Sonderling* and Shadow, I must be permitted to doubt whether the Charity which hastens to mitigate those evils, or the comfortable Indifference which, passing by and looking askance, "leaves them to providence," be also *temporal* concerns. I rather believe that spiritual and temporal, like soul and body, though distinguishable one from the other, are inseparably connected. These, however, it will be understood, are among the reveries of a *Sonderling*, which the clear-headed reader is at liberty to treat with contempt. But *àpropos* of the relations betwixt prosperity and adversity, rich and poor, I shall transcribe here a few rhymes, though they belong to a more recent period, for whilst in prison, I could not have written in verse even this much.

THOUGHTS, IN THE FORM OF DIALOGUE, FEB. 11, 1850.

"The poor? We cannot aid the poor!
All help is thrown away,
For want returns as wave to wave
Succeeds,—or day to day."
Alas! the rich as rarely know
How many wolves beset
The poor man's door, as they can tell
How those can best be met!

"By transient aid, even gifts of gold,
Great though the boon may be,
You cannot calm the restless waves
Of stern Adversity."
But bring again the light of Hope;
The magic lamp relume
Of Industry that had expired
In Want's o'erwhelming gloom,

And banish from that lowly roof
The fiend that oft has said:
"On earth there is no place for thee;
Seek refuge with the dead!"
The fiend that murmurs, "Look around!
On earth no heart remains,
Who pity feels for poverty,
Or would relieve its pains.

"The leaves that in the summer air
So gaily danced and shone,
When winter came with frost and gloom,
All faded and are gone.
Away, away!—The gloom of Want
The breath of chill Despair
Have robb'd thy prospects of their bloom,
And left a desert there.

"Seek refuge with the wither'd leaves,
That rains have swept away;
The fallen have but to meet their doom
In darkness and decay!"
Oh, measure not by weight in gold
The boon that 's kindly given,
If thoughts like these it can avert
From hearts by anguish riven!

The boon is not of gold *alone*;
(The poor thirst not for gold);
One gift for them is multiplied
In blessings manifold.
It is not one, but many gifts,
Far more than verse can tell;
A charm that can lost hopes recall,
And deadly foes repel.

It is not one, but many gifts;
The gold is but their shrine;
For gleams revive of early light,
That long had ceased to shine,

The sun of youth may cheer again
The downward path of age,
And yet some amaranth wreathes be twined
To mark that pilgrimage.

Oh, say not then, we cannot aid
The poor, the fallen, for yet
We know not by what countless foes
Their lives are here beset.
The spectre Want comes not alone,
But brings a grisly train
Of terrors wherewith Poverty
Unaided, strives in vain.

The boon is not of gold *alone;*
The Heart by whom 'tis given
Has influence powerful to invoke
On earth a ray from Heaven;
A ray that cheers the donor's path
No less than it inspires
The poor man's grateful prayer, who thence
New life and hope acquires.

The grisly train—Despair's dark form—
The fiend Misanthropy,
That haunted long his thorny track
From that pure lustre fly.
The gift is not of miser's gold;
'Tis like the amaranth spray,
An emblem bright, of life and light
That cannot meet decay.

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